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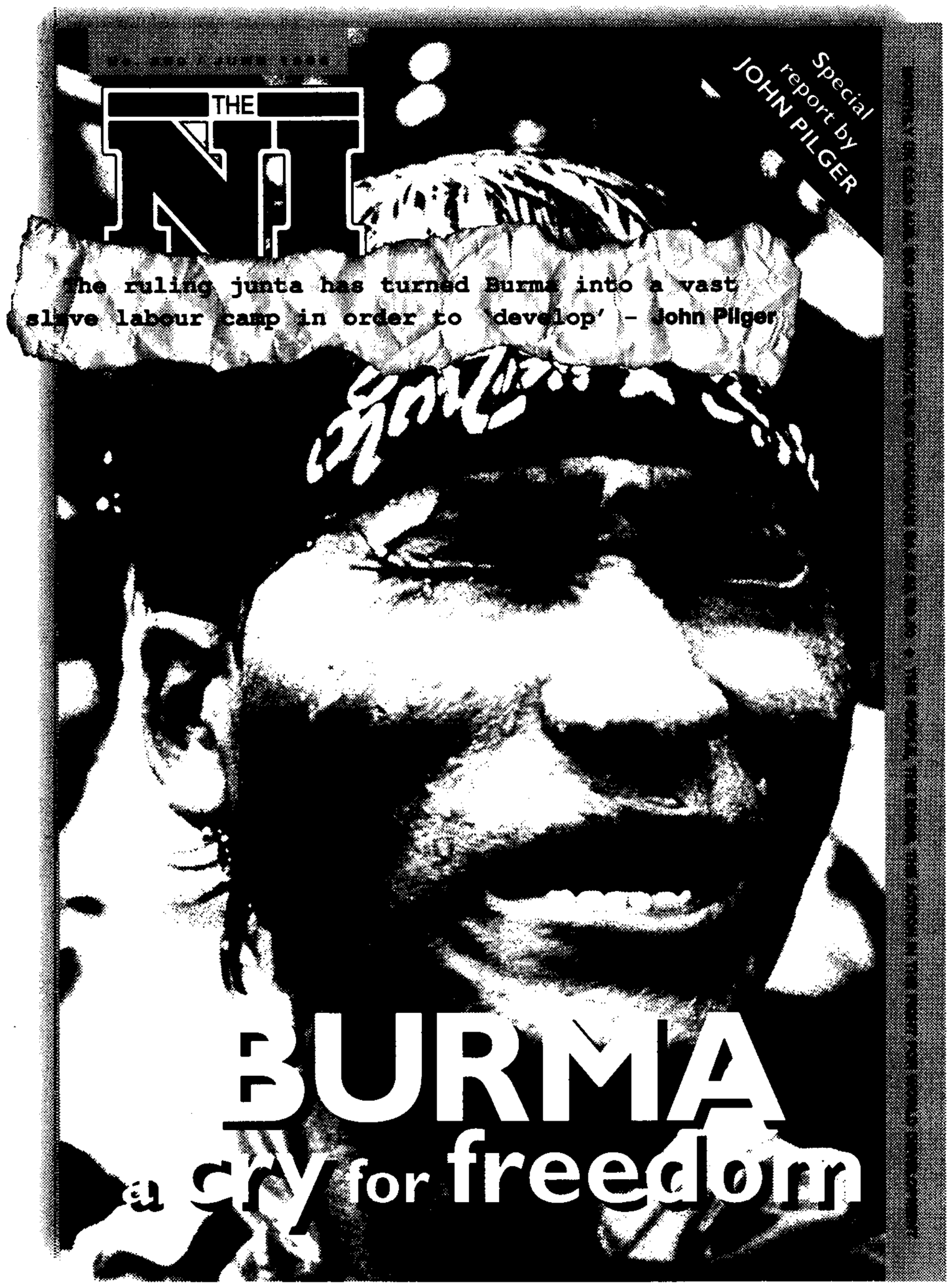
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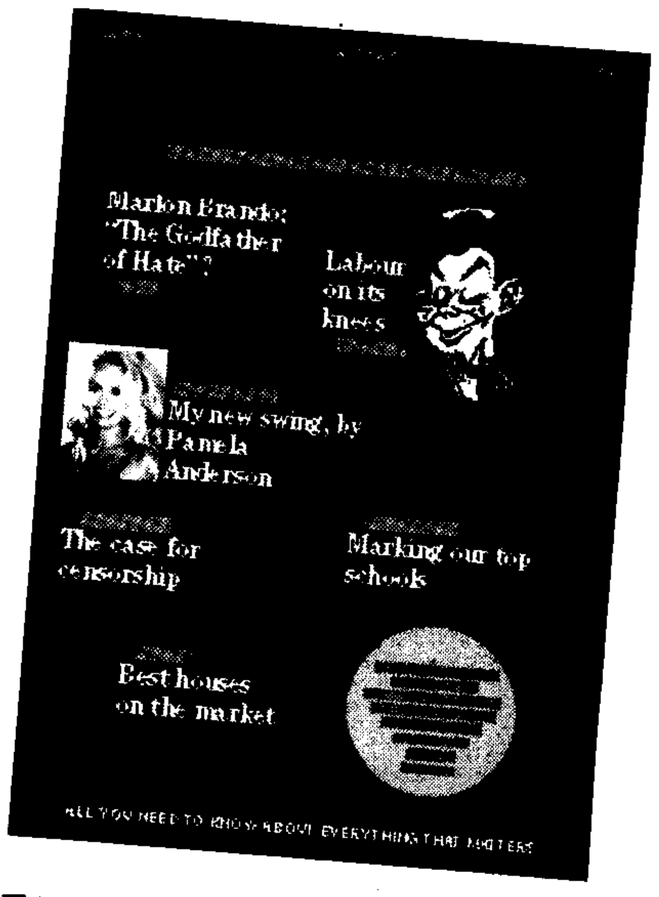
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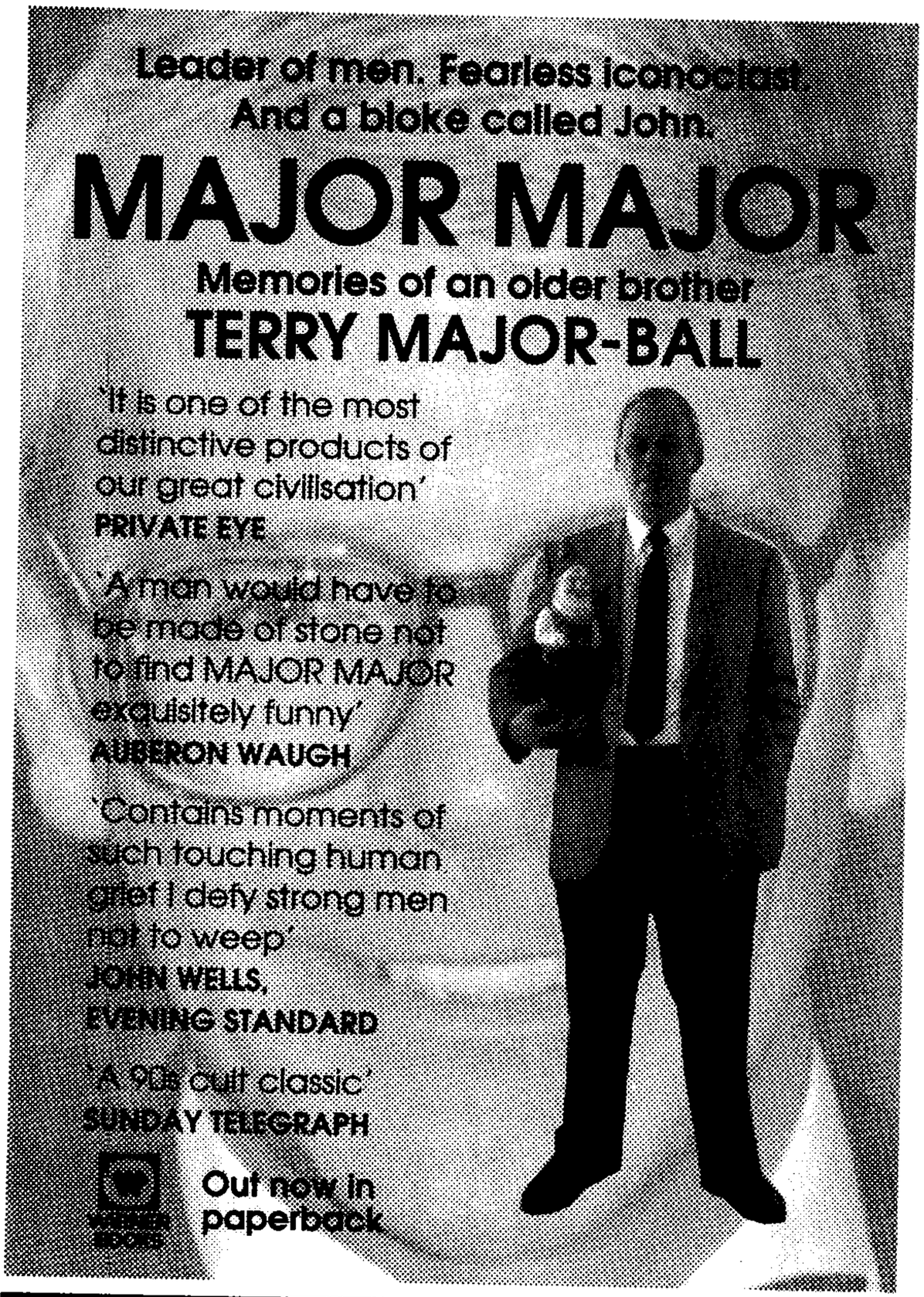
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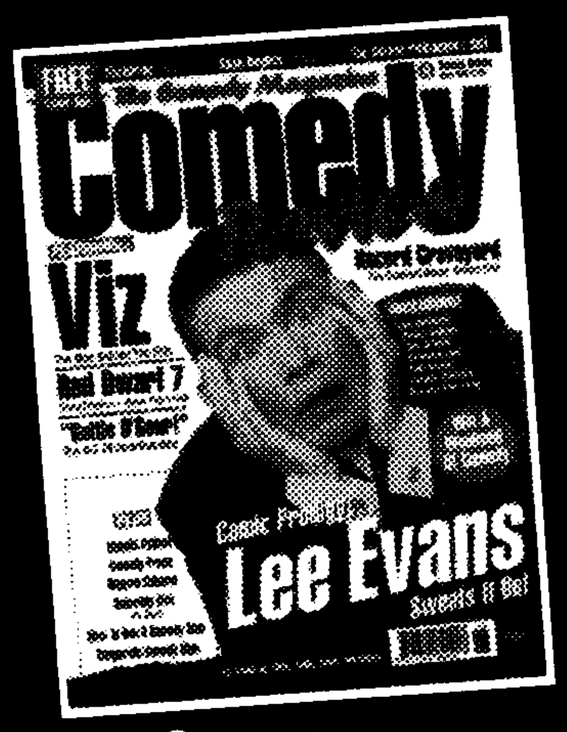

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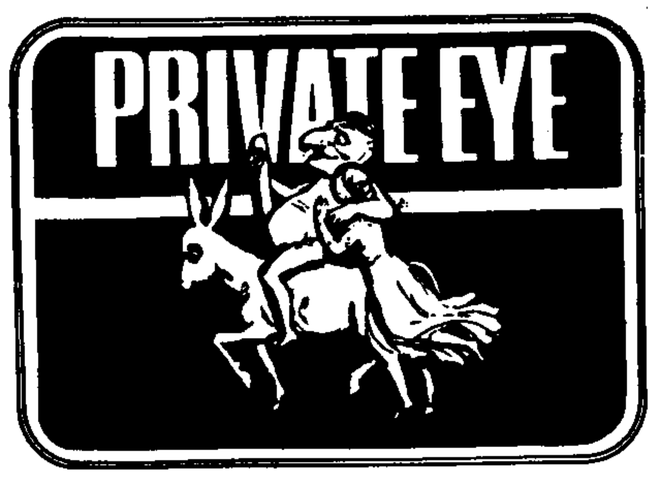


COLOUR SECTION

A SHORT meeting was held at 10 Downing Street on the morning of 9 May to decide the government's response to the Magill report on the Westminster council scandal. Present were the prime minister, environment secretary John Gummer and two trusted advisers from Tory central office.

According to a cryptic report in the *Financial Times* (10 May), "senior officials" suggested the government had to bite the bullet and roundly condemn the corruption. What had happened at Westminster, they urged, was of little significance elsewhere, and the government could not afford another dose of sleaze.

The proposal, which was not even seconded, was quickly dismissed. The Tory party, said a "senior strategist", was "in too deep" in the Westminster scandal for the government to condemn it. Major and Gummer agreed at once to cling to the straw of the surcharged councillors' right to appeal, and to say nothing at all until the appeal was heard (which will be well after the next election).

In the meantime officials were urged to drum up what is now known as "the Scott treatment" for the unfortunate author of the Westminster report, Touche Ross accountant John Magill.

The campaign against him stretches back to late 1990 when Howard Davies, now deputy governor of the Bank of England, was controller of the audit commission. Worried by the breaking of ranks at Westminster by a lone councillor who dared tell district auditor Magill of Porter's corruption, Porter contacted the then environment secretary, Michael Heseltine, and urged him to get rid of Davies as audit commission controller. Davies, she had discovered, was not "one of us" and might not be "reliable" in the business of covering up for corrupt Tory councillors. Heseltine, who was (and is) delighted by the demise of Porter, a close ally of his old enemy Margaret Thatcher, refused even to meet Porter, who flew into a terrible rage (see *Eye* 845).

While Major and Gummer (with Heseltine noticeably silent beside them) covered up for Porter in the Commons, the "Smear Magill" campaign took off on the Tory backbenches and elsewhere.

It was led by Simon Jenkins, who savaged Magill in the *Evening Standard* just as, in the *Times*, he had attacked Sir Richard Scott for daring to expose the lies of Jenkins's close friend William Waldegrave. Jenkins attacked the audit commission for turning down Porter's pleas to sack Magill "without a hearing". But in the procedure set down by law there is no reference to any hearing. In general, Jenkins concluded, the man who had uncovered the £31 million corrupt gerrymander was more to blame than the people who had perpetrated it.

Thus there was no reference to the 12 separate interviews Porter (flanked by her battery of leftwing lawyers) was granted with Magill; nor to her refusal to give evidence orally or in writing to the audit hearing after the preliminary judgments; nor to the refusal of her lawyers to propose corrections to the auditor's provisional history of events (which included all the main allegations); nor to her and her colleagues' systematic shredding of documents; nor to the nastiest charge of all: that Porter and Co crammed hundreds of undesirable Labour voters into flats they knew were riddled with asbestos. Instead, Jenkins and plenty of others (Ann Leslie and David Marquand on *Any Questions*, for instance) spun the line that what Porter had done was commonly done by Labour councillors, whereas anyone can see than in scale and detail the Westminster corruption was unique.

ANOTHER expensive cock-up with government computers has been chalked up by Andersen Consulting.

The £100 million contract to replace computerised national insurance records should have been completed by next February, but Andersen says it won't be able to do the job by then due to — wait for it — "development difficulties".

Eye readers will recall similar "development difficulties" which led, for instance, to £20 million of NHS money going down the drain at Wessex regional health authority; a couple of extra billions lavished on Operational Strategy, the huge scheme to put all benefits information on computer; and Andersen's sudden decision to walk away from its responsibilities to supply hospital support systems for the Northern and Yorkshire regional health systems.

The government is said to be "delighted" by the new national insurance disaster because it won't have to shell out for all of it. Andersen has been obliged to offer £12 million to cover the delay. This is because the national insurance scheme is part of the government's "private finance initiative" (PFI) which puts some liability for cock-ups on the firm responsible.

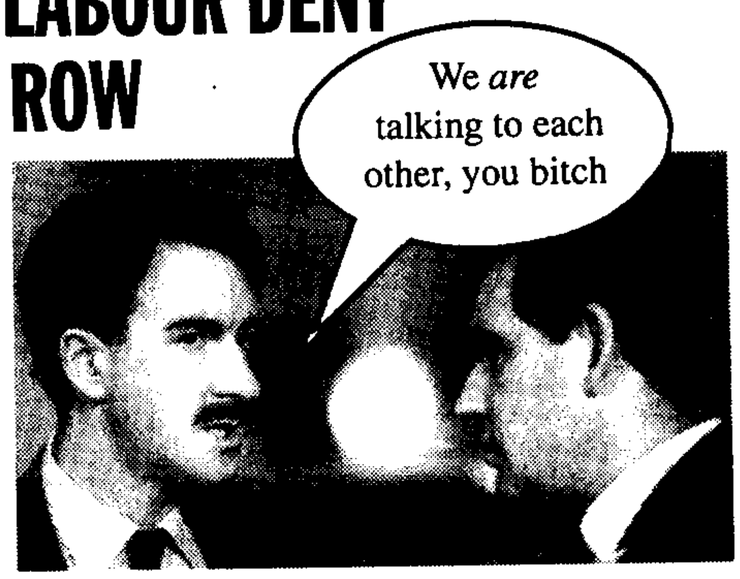
The real reason for the PFI, however, was revealed in *Eye* 861: "Payments to consultants remain hidden from ministers and scrutiny by the public accounts committee." The idea for PFI came from another expensive consultant, Arthur Andersen, the other half of Andersen Consulting.

IN *EYE* 896 we referred to the shareholding of Lolicia Olivia Aitken, wife of Jonathan Aitken MP, in Comesta, a Swiss company based in Geneva which long ago gave £12,000 to a media venture in which TV-am (director: J. Aitken) had a stake.

The *Eye* mused about the strange fact that this interest had never been declared in the MPs' register and — hey presto! In the 1996 register, published a couple of weeks later, Jonathan Aitken for the first time declares: "Comesta SA; a small trading company owned by spouse and her family since the 1960s. Now almost inactive but previously operating in fashion design, marketing and consulting in Switzerland."

● *A Matter of Public Interest*..... 7
● *A Royal Hallo!*..... 7
● *Museum Conflict*..... 11
● *Immigration Update*..... 12
● *Slicker on Goldsmith*..... 13

LABOUR DENY ROW



Street of Shame

BORIS JOHNSON, the *Daily Telegraph*'s chief political pundit, celebrated May Day with a column explaining why the Tories should not ditch John Major.

"He remains, personally, a more attractive figure to many voters than his party as a whole," Johnson reported, warning that in a leadership contest between Major and John Redwood "Right would be pitted against Left, precipitating chaos in the party and an early election in unpropitious circumstances".

Last year, of course, there was indeed a leadership contest between Redwood and Major, pitting right against left. But on that occasion Boris Johnson seemed only too eager for battle, denouncing Major as "a man of compromise" who "lacks the singleness of purpose now needed to give his men a theme". Unless he was kicked out and replaced by Redwood, "the Tories will carry neither conviction nor the country".

Why, then, is Johnson suddenly declaring his undying loyalty to the prime minister? Presumably it cannot be related to the fact that Boris Johnson was recently adopted as a Conservative parliamentary candidate.

THE circulation-building gimmicks of the *Daily Telegraph* are growing ever more desperate.

Visiting a Texas DIY store the other day, an *Eye* reader was startled to notice a shop assistant stuffing customers' carrier bags with "free" copies of the newspaper. When he refused to accept his unwanted gift, the assistant was unsurprised. "You're not the only one to do that today," she confessed wearily.

THE 40th birthday bash of *Sun* editor Stuart Higgins was a lavish affair, so it was just as well the notoriously stingy News International picked up the £40,000 tab. The money, however, was well spent. Richard Branson turned up in manacles to prove he is not a groper.

Also present were Di's new PR Jane Atkinson and hapless palace flunkey Jeff Crawford. Just to show how effective their attempts to suck up to the *Sun* were proving, they were able in the early hours to enjoy the *Sun*'s big Saturday picture splash: Prince William relaxing on the playing fields of Eton with Brian's personal assistant, Tiggy Legge-Bourke.

The palace promptly complained to the PCC and the *Sun* was immediately forced to publish a grovelling apology for breaching their privacy. The newspaper showed its genuine remorse by a subsequent spread showing Di in a swimsuit on holiday. The shots of her bum as she bent over must have delighted Jane Atkinson and made her determined to attend Higgins' *next* birthday party.

LAST *Eye*'s claim that *Express* editor Richard Addis was too timid to sack anyone has finally goaded the former monk into action.

Visciously, he has announced the sacking of... a single graduate trainee, which will save the paper a massive £12,500 a year — the equivalent of just 19 TV reviews by Roy Hattersley.

Over on the sports desk, though, Addis is still recruiting furiously and the gnarled, male sports hacks were shocked to be introduced to their new tennis correspondent: the lovely Heather Purchase.

She is the first ever female staffer on sport, and her main qualifications seem to be a short spell at the *Evening Standard* followed by a career in tennis coaching. One of her more renowned tennis pupils was, er, Richard Addis. She also happens to be Addis's dancing partner at his local tennis club disco.

Another surprise move is that of Sarah King, an attractive hackette last seen writing fashion features on the return in popularity of the mac. She is now deputy arts editor.

MAX "Hitler" Hastings seems to be in an uncharacteristic dither as he broods on whether his newspaper, the London *Evening Standard*, should abandon its allegiance to the Conservative party.

At lunch with his staff the other day, he finally put the question: "How many of you think we should support Blair?" Everyone present raised their hands — except rightwing pundit Anne Applebaum (who, as an American, shouldn't be entitled to vote anyway).

Can Hitler, as a lifelong Tory, bring himself to do it? Since he has already been given the OK by his proprietor, Lord Rothermere, the answer is almost certainly yes: Max is not a man to disobey a peer of the realm.

POOR Andrew Jaspan, rudely sacked from his post as editor of the *Observer*, has nothing to do these days except whinge about his paltry redundancy cheque of £150,000, which is tax free.

His most recent moan was to Heather Connon, City editor of the *Obs* and a Jaspan appointee. His call came tactfully on a Friday afternoon, possibly the City desk's busiest time, to ask her advice on how to invest his redundancy cheque.

Jaspan has been arguing that the pay-off, apparently based on how much he would have received if he had seen out his two-year contract, is too low. He claims it should represent five years' pay because his public sacking probably means he will never work again.

"...Northern edition of Hello!"

ROY HATTERSLEY MP was castigated by the press as a champagne socialist after the recent round of income disclosures. With £105,400 for his *Guardian* and *Mail on Sunday* columns, Hattersley ranked as the highest-earning MP.

This did not include his earnings as a television critic for the *Daily Express*, which he did not feel compelled to disclose (£650 a day). It was not embarrassment over the enormity of these payments which prevented the Labour veteran from revealing them, but the fact that his opinions on television can be in no way linked to his parliamentary career.

Oddly it is Hattersley's parliamentary secretary who has to call the *Express* and request tapes of the programmes. These are then biked to the House and passed to the great man to review.

HACKETTE Chrissey Iley, who *didn't* give Steven Berkoff a jerk-off during an interview (see *Eyes passim*), has crossed swords with the actor once more.

This time it was in London's *Evening Standard*, in which Berkoff railed against the rash of picture by-lines now appearing in national newspapers. He singled out the venomous Iley, contrasting her "coy pose" at the top of her *Sunday Times* relationship page with what he had seen coming out of the Groucho Club: "A short woman of stout dimensions."

No sooner had the piece appeared than Iley's husband, pop writer Spencer Bright, called the hapless *Standard* hack who penned the offending item. "Spell your name," demanded Mr Iley. "I'm taking you to the Press Complaints Council!" This is very sweet of him, if breathtakingly hypocritical. Perhaps someone could discuss the Iley marriage in the next Relationship of the Week column in the *Sunday Times*.

HAVING sacked most of his senior executives, new *Observer* editor Will Hutton is trying to steal their friends and contacts.

Leafing through the diary of recently-departed assistant editor Sarah Baxter, and noticing an imminent lunch engagement with John Patten, he rang the Tory MP to confirm the booking. "I'm sorry that Sarah can't be there," he explained, "but I'll come instead."

Patten, who had been looking forward to a gossipy meal with an attractive hackette rather than a two-hour Huttonite lecture on the stakeholder economy, was unimpressed. "No you bloody won't," he replied briskly.

THE recent marriage in Barbados of actress Nichola McAuliffe, of *Surgical Spirit* fame, to the *Daily Mirror*'s Don Mackay — the Rab C. Nesbitt of Fleet Street — generated a degree of unpleasantness, despite the heartwarming presence of *Hello!* magazine.

John Rendell, social editor of *Hello!*, gently suggested that the happy couple might like to wear different clothes for the glossy wedding photos. Don "Blackie" MacKay, who had been sampling the local rum, felt his sartorial elegance was being slighted, and in true *Mirror* style (cf Alastair Campbell v Michael White) promptly took a swing at the social editor of *Hello!*

MORALE among long-suffering staff at ailing black newspaper *The Voice* has not been improved by news of a looming takeover. Few can hope to keep their jobs if the paper is sold to Croydon Advertiser Group owners Southnews.

But why is *The Voice* vulnerable? It enjoys monopoly status in a potentially lucrative niche market, and hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of advertising revenue guaranteed by the equal opportunities policies of public sector employers.

Part of the answer lies in the expensive personal tastes of the paper's owner, Val "Yardie" McCalla. McCalla got his nickname because of his no nonsense business style. He sacked *The Voice*'s first editor before the launch issue was even out, and it is only a few months since he closed the paper's sister publication, *The Weekly Journal*, making the entire workforce redundant.

In 1994 *The Voice*'s parent company had a turnover of £4.5 million, but posted a loss of nearly £165,000. The bottom line wasn't boosted by a bill for the chairman's salary of more than £300,000; nor by written-off loans to the same chairman of nearly £135,000; nor by the acquisition of racehorses valued at more than £60,000. And who is the chairman? Er, step forward, Val "Yardie" McCalla.

FIRST, interview Andrew Marr, new editor of the *Independent*, for Radio Four's *Mediumwave* programme, and collect a large cheque.

Next, reuse all his quotations from the interview in your piece about him for the next issue of the media *Guardian*, remembering to collect another large cheque.

In freelance circles this technique is widely known as "doing a Roy Greenslade".

"Marvellous how they always return to the same place year after year"

HALLO!

THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! THE Princess of Wales is suffering from a sad delusion. When her PR person Jane Atkinson asked her if it was wise to put out the information about her divorce stalling (and the row over her title), Diana replied: "Yes, otherwise we'll just read their version in the *Daily Telegraph*."

Diana, it seems, firmly believes that Charles leaks information to the *Torygraph*'s Robert Hardman. She shouldn't be so paranoid. It's not Charles, it's the Duke of Edinburgh...

HALLO! *WHILE my young friend James Hewitt speaks so movingly of his "very, very special" feelings for the Princess of Wales — he said once "she had bad breath and basically, er, wanted it the whole time" — he is now accused of involvement with yet ANOTHER married woman.*

A prominent member of James's local hunt, the South Devon, is under the unfortunate misapprehension that some kind of special friendship has developed between his spouse and the dashing "Major", and the man in question has now decamped from the marital home to the next village.

Meanwhile James, still desperately trying to sell his 38-minute TV confession about his love for Diana, sinks ever deeper into despair. I fear he will soon lose his looks; and he risks ending up a very red-faced "Major" indeed due to excessive in-take of port. However, when one rings to ask what one can do to help, the former cavalry officer simply sobs: "Nothing, nothing, nothing. My life's fucked!" As, of course, is Diana('s).

HALLO! THE photo of the century? Many claim authorship of this fabled snap of a middleaged, paunchy white man in vest and baseball cap, anxiously clutching a lovely Asian babe. Now it is even used to advertise *Granta*, the highbrow literary magazine!

Fashionable photographer Terry O'Neil rings, excitedly, to insist that it was he, and not Sir Nicholas Lloyd, formerly "editor" of the *Daily Express*, who took the legendary image — an icon of our troubled age. Modestly, Sir Nick concurs.

"It was in Barbados at the villa of TV producer Beryl Vertue," he recalls in hushed tones. "It was Beryl's camera, I arranged everything, but Terry actually pressed the button." *(Please do not reprint photograph. Our readers have had quite enough of it. Ed.)*

HALLO! *CELEBRITY scientist Richard Dawkins, author of the infamous* The Selfish Genius, *appears to adopt a lackadaisical attitude in public towards his arch-media enemy, staunch Catholic Paul Johnson. However many attacks St Paul makes on the "militant atheist", Dawkins shrugs off the criticism with amused nonchalance. Imagine my surprise at a recent dinner party to watch Dawky in conversation with a prominent solicitor. Instead of lecturing on his particular brand of Darwinism, he bored the lawyer senseless asking detailed legal questions. About evolution in solicitors perhaps? Not a bit of it. Dawky wanted to see if he had any case for suing St Paul of Loonybins over his constant attacks.*

HALLO! **TO WESTLANDS, Somerset, for the "roll out" of a new helicopter in the presence of handsome defence secretary Michael "Caudillo" Portillo.**

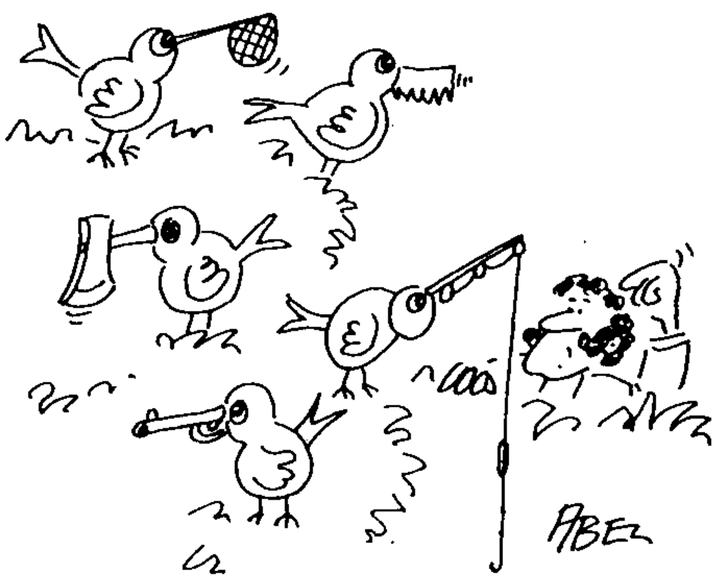
Realizing his speech is falling flat, Michael tells a joke about an elderly MP he knew when first at Westminster. The old boy, he said, had never been invited to appear on TV; but when finally asked he was told the fee would be £25. So he promptly sat down and wrote a cheque. Ho, ho.

Sparse laughter greeted this lame recounting of a hoary old myth, so Michael stumbled on to reveal the identify of the MP: "Sir Tufton Bufton." The puzzled silence was broken by embarrassed titters from those who realized El Caudillo had inadvertently referred to the late Sir Tufton Beamish by his *Eye* nickname. At least we now know what Michael reads as he prepares to take over the leadership of the Tory party.

HALLO! GOOD news for my dear friend Sir Jammy Fishpaste, whose efforts to keep Britain British have been endorsed by the highest authority: Dame Barbara Cartland.

Her Royal Pinkness, who has been listening to the leader of the new Referendum party with something bordering on adoration, told an admirer only last week: "He's a German-Jew, but he's awfully good".

'The Marquesa'



It was to take many years of study before Darwin would be able to explain how the Galapagos Finches had evolved such a variety of beaks

FAT CAT FLAP

WITH British Gas facing vastly reduced cash flow thanks to reforms demanded by regulator Claire Spottiswoode, can it really afford staff like William Friedrich, a bigshot American lawyer recruited from US law firm Shearman & Stirling as "general counsel"?

Friedrich's salary is undisclosed, but his contract entitles him to travel by Concorde to see his family whenever he pleases — at British Gas's expense, natch.

"Mr Friedrich is a UK resident but his family is still based in America," says a spokesman. "They will be relocating to this country later this year. It is part of our normal company policy to pay relocation expenses."

Twice since he was appointed in December Friedrich has availed himself of the service. "Both times he flew out by Concorde, though on the first occasion he came back on the shuttle," says the spokesman. "British Gas paid for these trips. It is only reasonable that people should see their families when based in the UK. He's a very senior and important executive of the company and that is what Concorde is designed for: to fly executives to their destinations and return them quickly so they are there for work straight away."

Any British Gas employee who wants to visit family abroad need only ask, it seems.

A MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST (3)

"IS there," we asked in *Eye* 896, "no end to the officially-sanctioned persecution of Sara Keays? Not if parliament has anything to do with it, apparently."

And so it continues. The select committee on procedure has now delivered its report on "reference to matters subject to an injunction" — prompted by the naming of Sara and Flora Keays in an early-day motion from Brian Sedgemore MP — and it is just as misleading and dishonest as anticipated.

"Our inquiry," the committee announces, "has from the outset been concerned not with the particular case which gave rise to the speaker's reference but with the general issues arising." This is simply untrue. Much of the report is given over to evidence from the official solicitor, who repeatedly discusses the gagging order against Sara Keays and her daughter Flora — or "Child Z", as she is charmingly known for official purposes.

In a lengthy section headed "History of Proceedings Concerning Child Z", the official solicitor claims it was Sara Keays herself who applied for the "Mary Bell order" banning any publicity for herself or her daughter. As we pointed out many months ago (*Eye* 891), this is disingenuous, to say the least.

What actually happened was that in March 1993 Sara Keays went to court to apply for an increase in maintenance payments from Lord Parkinson, Flora's absentee father. On the very morning of the hearing, Parkinson's solicitors suddenly announced that he would be seeking an injunction to stop press coverage. Keays thought the application was unnecessary, but her lawyer explained that any attempt to contest it would delay the maintenance proceedings by several months. As she was more concerned with getting the money which she desperately needed to look after Flora, she reluctantly agreed. It was only after the hearing that she learned how draconian this gagging order really was. Having thought it merely prevented her from talking about the maintenance payments, she discovered that, in effect, it stopped her from mentioning Flora at all.

Elsewhere in his evidence the official solicitor admits that in September 1993, only a few months later, Sara Keays went on television to reveal the existence of the gagging order "which I am now breaching" — whereupon Parkinson immediately took out an *in personam* injunction against Sara Keays herself. So how can the official solicitor continue to insist that she was an enthusiastic supporter of the injunction? Nevertheless, the committee on procedure accept his version of events without question, just as it accepts his other errors — such as the suggestion that Flora Keays attended a "medical institute" in Israel, which is in fact an educational institute and has no medical function at all.

The hon. members could have avoided these elementary howlers had they read the written evidence Sara Keays submitted to the committee. But where is it? "We heard oral evidence on this subject on 21 February from the Master of the Rolls, Rt Hon Sir Thomas Bingham, and from the Official Solicitor and his deputy," the committee reports. "We have also received a memorandum from the Clerk of the House." And, er, that's it. Keays's own memorandum has been binned without so much as an acknowledgement. Presumably the committee members — whose interrogation of the master of the rolls and the official solicitor was toe-curlingly deferential — couldn't bear to look at anything which might have disturbed their smug complacency.

IN THE TEAROOM

WHEN the good ship "new" Labour was launched, no one believed it would complete its voyage without the occasional punch-up among the crew.

Then, the most likely troublemaker appeared to be the former P&O steward and salty lower deck pugilist, John Prescott; but he has proved a model sailor. Last week's spat between Gordon Brown and Peter Mandelson was only part of a four-cornered squabble that is set to erupt into a full-scale wardroom brawl.

As Cap'n Blair has grown steadily more authoritarian, so the Brandoesque and mutteringly petulant Brown has been cast by some in the leader's office as a potential Fletcher Christian. In fact Brown is just naturally moody and has done nothing remotely mutinous beyond expressing occasional exasperation at the follies of some of Blair's closest advisers — people such as policy wonk David Milliband, and press secretary Alastair Campbell. But bad feeling has proved infectious, and the shadow chancellor's own aides, Charlie Whelan and Ed Balls, are squaring up for a fight with Blair's team.

Grinning in the corner is Blair's real enemy, Robin Cook. He doesn't want to be foreign secretary in a Labour government, he wants to be chancellor. Once he has that job he'll split the party over the question of a single currency and then make a bid for the leadership. Cook's pals have been busy stirring up trouble by suggesting that Brown's temper could be a serious liability: "One ill judged remark in office could send the pound into a tail-spin", etc. Cook's latest wheeze is to insist that all new initiatives have to be ratified by his policy forum, stopping Blair and Mandelson pushing through their modernising "project" on the sly.

Where does all this leave Mandelson? Falling over himself to be reasonable — even offering to apologise for things he hasn't done; getting those friends he can muster to remind Blair that it has been Mandelson's adroitness that has kept "new" Labour off the political reefs and sandbanks thus far; and insisting that this is no time to drop the pilot.

'Urquhart'

THE government limps on with its majority of one intact, despite the antics of Barry Legg, Tory MP for Milton Keynes and former aide of disgraced Shirley Porter at Westminster council. How did Legg — and John Major — survive?

Legg featured in the original list of councillors likely to be surcharged, but his name disappeared from the list in the final report. This has led to shouts of glee and triumph from rightwing Tory MPs that he has been "exonerated" (Eric Pickles and William Cash) and "cleared" (Walter Sweeney). *Eye* readers can assess for themselves the extent of Legg's "exoneration" by studying the following extracts from district auditor John Magill's final report.

"As a leading member of the chairmen's group, Councillor Legg was aware of the designated sales policy, that it was targeted toward marginal wards and that it was hoped to produce in them certain numbers of additional voters who were thought likely to vote for the party of which he was a member. I find as a fact that Councillor Legg knew... that the main objective of leading members in devising and implementing a designated sales policy was to increase Conservative Party support by increasing designated sales in marginal wards... I find as a fact that Councillor Legg knew it was wrong for the council to exercise its powers in order to secure an increase in the number of likely Conservative voters in marginal wards."

The only reason Legg wasn't surcharged, explains Magill, was that he may not have been "actively involved in the development of the policy" and may not have "appreciated that he was under a duty to disclose the unlawful and improper conduct on the part of others". He was there when the robbery was planned. He knew all about it and knew it was wrong. But he didn't actively take part in it and he didn't think he ought to tell anyone about it. He was "exonerated" in almost exactly the same way as was William Waldegrave by the Scott inquiry.

JOHN MAJOR has again been denouncing the "teenage madness" of Scottish devolution. How embarrassing, then, to discover that the demented teenagers include some of his most senior colleagues.

Here are a few commitments from Scottish Conservative candidates in the October 1974 election:

"*Scotland would have a Scottish Assembly to make the important decisions*" — From the election address of Peter Fraser, the Tory candidate for Aberdeen North. He is now Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, a Scottish office spokesman in the House of Lords.

"*We will establish a Scottish Assembly, drawing its members from the new local authorities*" — From the election address of John Mackay, the Tory candidate for Argyllshire. He is now Lord Mackay of Ardbrecknish, a government spokesman in the House of Lords.

"*We shall set up a Scottish Assembly immediately. Scotland's housekeeping will be Scotland's business*" — From the election address of Michael Hirst, the Tory candidate for Central Dunbartonshire. He is now Sir Michael Hirst, chairman of the Scottish Conservative party.

"*Scotland — To support greater economic, legislative and administrative control over Scottish affairs by Scots. To do so by siting the Oil Division of the Department of Energy in Scotland, by establishing a Scottish Assembly in Edinburgh, and by making a substantial proportion of the revenues from oil available for projects in Scotland*" — From the election address of Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, Tory candidate for Edinburgh West. Lord James is still MP for Edinburgh West and an under-secretary in the Scottish office.

"*Give the people of Scotland more say over their own affairs with a Scottish Assembly. Scotland's housekeeping will then be in Scotland's own hands*" — From the election address of Bill Walker, Tory candidate for Dundee West. Bill Walker is now MP for Tayside North and an outspoken critic of a Scottish Assembly.

"*I also support the Conservative plan for a Scottish Assembly*" — From the election address of Gerald Warner, Tory candidate for Hamilton. Warner is now a paid personal adviser to the Scottish secretary, Michael Forsyth.

A MASSIVE cock-up by the Scottish division of Her Majesty's Stationery Office has cost taxpayers millions and cast doubt on HMSO's readiness for privatisation.

In May 1995 HMSO Scotland agreed to provide £6.5 million worth of printed school material to the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan via *Uztoshkitob*, an unknown group who produced no letters of credit and whom, bizarrely, the Scottish division decided to accept "on trust".

Embarrassingly, foreign secretary Malcolm Rifkind had to play debt collector when he raised the matter of the book debt with the prime minister of Uzbekistan during a visit earlier this year. When it became clear that at least £5 million of this overseas deal was irrecoverable, the national audit office (NAO) criticised HMSO Scotland, saying its officials had "exercised insufficient control" over the Uzbeki government contract.

The government remains calm over the embarrassing cock-up, even though HMSO as a whole faced a massive £39.7 million deficit in 1995 due to a redundancy provision of £26.1 million. As Roger Freeman told the Commons: "The [privatisation] sale process is proceeding well and we have already received a healthy level of interest from good quality bidders." Apparently the failure of HMSO Scotland's Uzbeki deal was due *not* to incompetence but to management naivety! So that's all right, then.

I-I-I Special

THIS issue's Kim Il Sung Award for the greatest celebration of self in an MP's constituency newspaper goes to David Willetts (Con, Havant).

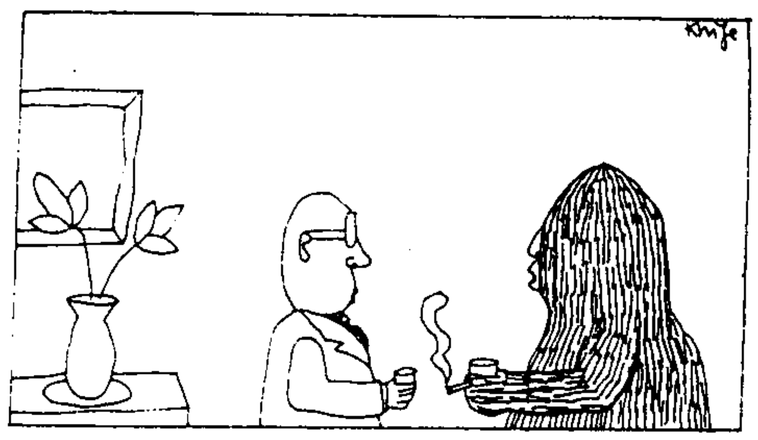
Mentions of self	44
Photographs of self	2
Great sayings quoted	6

THOSE driving past RAF Kinloss, near Inverness, may be surprised to see as many as six RAF Nimrods standing idle — a quarter of the Nimrod maritime reconnaissance fleet, which should be flying over Britain's shipping lanes, guarding them.

In fact, as fast as the planes land they are being mothballed indefinitely because they are not safe to fly. Private contractors recruited a year ago to service the Nimrods have been, well, less than reliable.

The demoralised workers, employed by a consortium called Flight Refuelling Limited, are apparently ill-trained, underpaid and overworked. While RAF chiefs are furious and have called the company's bosses in for a four-day bollocking at an official "contract meeting", RAF personnel who have traditionally done the job in-house are smugly noting the contractors' mistakes.

Defence secretary Michael Portillo, trying to save money under the Competing for Quality Initiative, will not be happy to receive the bill for this latest fiasco, which is almost an action replay of the Tornado saga. That cost taxpayers tens of millions after a private firm called Airwork botched repairs and maintenance of the fighters.



*"I don't **do** anything. I'm a sloth."*

THE foreign office and ministry of defence were in splendidly two-faced form at the landmines conference in Geneva.

Public opinion in Britain had already embarrassed the government over its opposition to landmine bans and its championing of the smart mine (the self-destruct or self-neutralise variety): prior to the conference it declared that it would in fact support a worldwide ban on anti-personnel landmines.

For good measure, the UK would "also destroy a substantial part of her existing stocks of anti-personnel landmines". Future use of these lethal weapons would be limited to "exceptional circumstances and with specific ministerial authorisation". Even the sacred market was not to be exempt. "Export of all types of anti-personnel to all destinations" were prohibited, too.

In Geneva, however, it soon became clear that the British delegation had merely put up a smokescreen. While Britain agreed to destroy 44 per cent of her outdated stocks of mines, the remaining 56 per cent were to be retained to be used only "in exceptional circumstances". Foreign office minister David Davies announced that the 44 per cent would be replaced with the self destructing variety.

The government's insistence on keeping the right to import landmines that they were so committed to banning also raised eyebrows. After denying "any duplicity" in its statement, the British delegation then claimed: "We will continue our procurement policy... This may include doing nothing... Our future procurement is hypothetical." Depressingly the British won the day. The conference agreed a partial ban with smart mines remaining legitimate.

NOOKS and CORNERS

MY PICTURE shows a handsome Regency crescent in Gloucester. Part of a larger complex of buildings, it was designed in about 1811 by the distinguished Scottish architect William Stark, and was completed after his death in 1823.

Such elegant buildings would obviously make desirable residences or smart offices. But they are derelict, having been empty for nine years: most of the windows are broken and the site is overgrown. Yet the buildings are for sale. The problem is that the owner seems really not very keen to sell. And, yet again, the delinquent owner of these grade II buildings is not some local spiv or other private villain, but the government in the shape of the South West regional health authority.

For this crescent — as fine as anything in, say, Cheltenham — is not, in fact, a row of houses. Rather, it is a lunatic asylum: the Horton Road Hospital, first proposed in 1794 by the social reformer, Sir Oneseiphorus Paul. The result, built by the county of Gloucestershire and the city of Gloucester, is of particular historical interest and is a handsome and eminently reusable building by any standards — particularly in a ravaged city like Gloucester. For though it may have a rather special medieval cathedral, it is a pretty drear place otherwise.

So the crescent at Horton Road is really rather valuable. And, to its credit, Gloucester city council has resisted pressure from the South West RHA to demolish the empty and neglected buildings. As usual, this stupid and blinkered public body would prefer a cleared site so the land — a mature garden — can be intensively developed with housing when the health authority's clear duty is to be looking for a purchaser able and willing to restore listed buildings which, after all, are both useful and beautiful. So potential purchasers, including housing associations, have been turned away because they did not offer enough money. All of which contradict's the government's own guidelines on the disposal of listed buildings.

IN THE opinion of those stalwart and practical defenders of our built assets, SAVE Britain's Heritage, Horton Road is one of the two most important grade II-listed mental hospitals still in the ownership of the poor old national health service.

The other is the North Wales Asylum at Denbigh. This is a large and fine building in the Jacobean style originally built in 1842-48 and designed — as it so happens — by Gloucester architects: Fulljames & Waller. It was finally closed in 1995 and now Clwyd health authority wants to demolish half the buildings as a prelude to "marketing" them.

The reasons proposed for this wanton demolition are those usually given when a large hospital becomes surplus to requirements: it was purpose built and so cannot easily be adapted; it is vast; the closure was phased over eight years so marketing it was difficult; the buildings are Victorian and listed... But, as SAVE demonstrated in its report, *Mind over Matter,* ***all these problems can be overcome by imaginative planning and flexibility. But the health authorities seem only to be able to think in terms of crude asset stripping, thereby condemning sound and potentially useful structures to prodigal destruction.***

A possible use of these buildings — like so many others made redundant — is, perhaps, as a prison, for while the government is happy to release schizophrenics into the "community" it is more and more keen on locking everyone else up. But the home secretary seems to prefer these to be brand new, so to give useful work to supporters of the Conservative party. But, in the case of the North Wales Asylum, a better and more obvious use for these buildings is as the new headquarters for the newly created Denbighshire borough council. Why not, indeed? Because that would require imagination, foresight and a responsible attitude towards non-renewable built resources. Some hope.

'Piloti'

QUANGO NEWS

QUANGO queen Janet Trotter was recently promoted to chair the NHS's South and West region (see *Eye* 897). This is in addition to her £90,000-a-year post as director of the College of Higher Education in Cheltenham; the £4,000 she gets as a member of the Higher Education Funding Council; and the expenses she receives as a member of the Teaching Training Agency.

The previous chair of the South and West region was a Mrs Rennie Fritchie, a friend of Trotter's. Last Christmas they jetted off together to Hong Kong to be received by the minister of education for celebrations at the International Centre for Advanced Studies.

Trotter had a special Christmas present for her friend — an honorary fellowship of Cheltenham College. Now a few months on, Fritchie has stepped down as chair of the NHS region and her friend has been appointed in her place.

The centre which the pair were visiting in Hong Kong was the commercial arm of Cheltenham college, which has debts of more than £11 million.

LONG-SUFFERING locals in Gartcosh, part of the "rust belt" east of Glasgow, were hoping that Scottish Enterprise, a quango chaired by Sir Donald MacKay, would find an environmentally friendly and attractive use for a huge, derelict steel works.

Instead the quango came up with the bright idea of selling the site to PowerGen, which wants to build a particularly ugly example of a £120 million power station there.

Luckily for Scottish Enterprise an economic and planning consultant called PIEDA backed its plans by reporting that the station could create thousands of jobs and attract other businesses to the site.

This independent consultancy can be trusted to have no alternative motives, particularly as its chairman is the respected Scottish businessman, er, Sir Donald MacKay.

Pseuds Corner

I don't think I'm a vain person. I think I'm vain in lacking vanity, possibly, as an affectation. I probably should be more practically vain, in order to be less existentially vain. It's a kind of psychic legerdemain, or prestidigitation.

WILL SELF
Independent

The image of the poverty-stricken student is a myth, according to a new survey. Were you hard-up in your college days?

Isabella Blow, fashion muse: I was very hard-up indeed. I was so broke I had to share a bed with a friend for a while. I was staying in Bryan Ferry's flat for free, which helped. This was in New York, where I was studying ancient Chinese art at Columbia. The fees were enormous. I worked in a coffee shop to raise money. I gave up the course after two terms and got a job on American Vogue.

Observer

For a moment I am suspended in the prism of a raindrop, upside down — askew in the ear of the poem's promise, caught uniquely within the poet's marvelling — marvellous — double presence.

TOM ADAIR (interviewing Seamus Heaney)
Scotland on Sunday

Sexy is the man who buys your sanitary protection. Sexier is the man who'll bob for apples and come up with a rusty grin. There's something ripe, earthy and disgustingly healthy about the car-crash sensuality of fucking in a pot of red water colours.

KATE SPICER
GQ

Through tracing the school uniform as an intersection of discourses reflecting and unravelling specialised regimes of truth, a genealogical examination which focuses on the emergences and discontinuities of practices can provide an edifying account of the way school uniforms have come to be understood in the culture of the school. These discourses which encompass, among other matters, moral, health, safety and social justices concerns, are part and parcel of a genealogy that is fluid and transient, and subject to a multitude of contingencies. Whilst a line of descent needs to be traced in the identification of these discourses, the genealogical project is not one of progress, but one of difference, discontinuity and contingency.

DAPHNE MEADMORE & COLIN SYMES
Governing the Schoolchild Body: discipline, uniforms and cultural diversity

If 'thought is the excrement of Being', then the aesthetic discharges of these autistic organisms, namely the viral metabolisms of GAVIN BROWN, DAVID FALCONER, BRUCE LOUDEN, DINOS CHAPMAN, RUSSELL HASWELL, GABY CHAPMAN, SAM TAYLOR-WOOD, JAMES WHITE and TIM SHEWARD occur as an aimless voiding, where delusion erases the redemptive 'use-value' of critical culture (you know who *we* are). Instead the genius in pumping blood and filtering toxins, and consequently the specimens exposing themselves in this exhibition are as critical as Tourette's Syndrome is intentional. Come and along and enjoy. Fuck.

Invitation to Private View, Some Of My Best Friends Are Geniuses Exhibition
Independent Art Space, London

This is not to imply that contemporary uniforms are oppressive since supposedly 'free', un-uniformed forms of bodily expression are also vehicles of power and ways of mapping and marking moral types. Rather, our concern is with the idea that a prescribed set of clothes can be a useful technology for achieving certain social and political goals (Rose, 1990) and can embody what Foucault (1991) has termed the "sovereignty-discipline-government" triangle which continues to be evident in programmes of governmentality.

DAPHNE MEADMORE & COLIN SYMES
ibid

CONTRIBUTORS: M. Carlson, C. Higgins, M. Peters, B. Adler, J. Whelan, 'Naughty Bunny'.

£10 paid for entries

TV

The Liver Birds (BBC1)

Frontiers (Carlton)

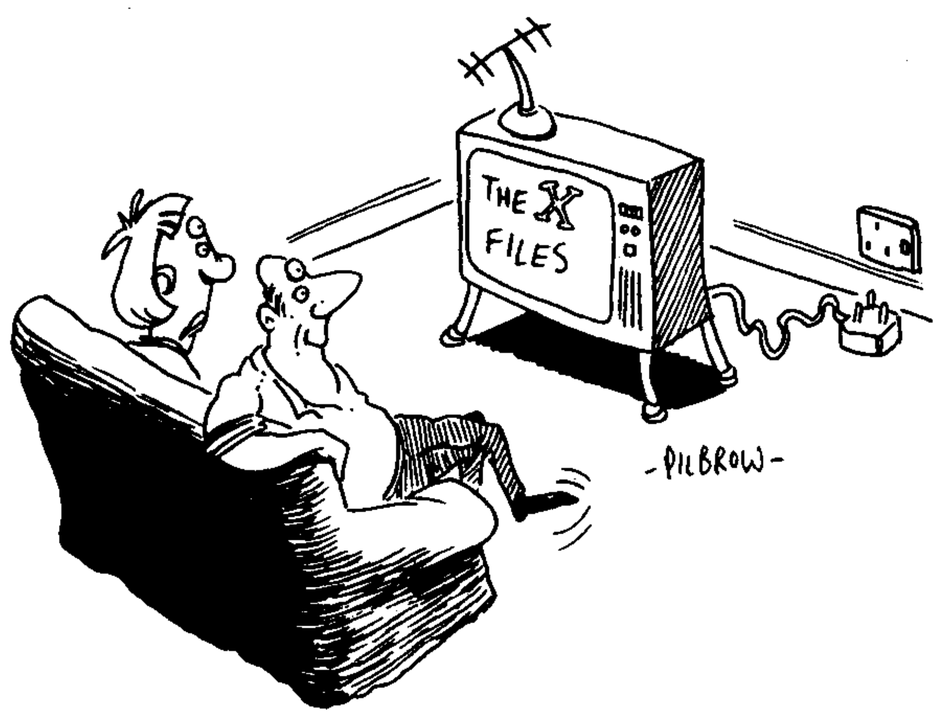
REMAKE mania has now extended to The Liver Birds, revived after nearly 20 years. This is a seriously bad idea, as *The Liver Birds*, more than most sitcoms, was rooted in the period of its creation: the first mild English stirrings of economic and sexual independence for women.

An even more crippling complication is that the writer, Carla Lane, has in the intervening period undergone a complete elective lobotomy of the comedy parts of her brain. Where once she wrote mildly decent gags, she now pours out stream-of-consciousness whimsy, as seen in the pisspoor *Luv*, an innovative though shortlived attempt at writing a sitcom without any jokes in it.

The revived *Liver Birds* is very much late Lane. Beryl is now thin and sad, triply divorced. Sandra is fat and sad, divorced and hopelessly in love with a married man. This is honest writing, though beyond the scope of the conventional sitcom. Two twentysomething women sharing a flat is amusing; two fiftysomething women sharing a flat again in contrived circumstances is simply melancholy material for a sit-sad rather than a sit-com.

As if conscious of this Lane has had a go at some jokes. Beryl, for example, was once married to an undertaker but it didn't work out: "If I moved suddenly or wore a white nightie, he got frightened. I had to leave him. I couldn't go through my life in slow motion." This has the structure and rhythms of a gag, but isn't one because it contains no observations. Would an undertaker really be frightened of sudden movements? Presumably all the good jokes about having sex with a funeral director were deemed unfitting for evening peak-time.

Whatever you say about **Frontiers** — ITV's new Tuesday night peak-time police drama — at least it isn't a remake of some old television series. Unfortunately it's a remake of a lot of new and current television series. This latest cop show also had the misfortune to be screened just a week after the Independent Television Commission's mid-term health checks on ITV franchise holders had objected to the quantity of police series on the commercial network.



Frontiers is, at least, a cliché with a twist, which, in the world of police series, virtually constitutes the avant garde. The cliché is a turf battle between two senior cops with different approaches to the solution of crime. Jarratt (Peter Howitt) is tall with long blond hair, a bit of a lad and a chancer, a believer in the gut instinct. Kirsten (Kevin McNally) is squat and dark, with buttoned-up bum and a devotion to the role of computers and logic in cracking crime. The twist is that these chalk-and-cheese policemen do not, as usual, work for the same police force but for neighbouring ones: South Morton and West Morton. The turf battles occur when criminals are operating across their border, giving the two men joint responsibility for operations and adding a new meaning to the old phrase about "helping the police with their inquiries".

In fact even this twist is not as original as the makers seem to believe, as similar turf battles were the plot motor of the BBC's *Between The Lines*, in which Neil Pearson and his lads were sent into other coppers' patches to investigate alleged misconduct. Conscious of being in a hall of echoes, the script starts to acknowledge the sounds. One cop refers to "all those programmes on TV". At another point, Jarratt jokes to Kirsten about the possibility of their appearing together on *Crimewatch*. References to other television programmes are increasingly inserted in scripts in the hope of adding reality, but they tend to have the opposite effect of stressing artificiality.

The oddest thing about this project is that its co-creator is Stephen Poliakoff, one of the most distinctive and original voices in stage and film drama. That even he fails to bend the standard format in any interesting way demonstrates that the long and restraining arm of the mainstream police serial arrests even the freshest talents.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

HOW many BBC employees does it take to move a computer?

First, a BBC journalist must telephone the PC support help desk, which sends a computer maintenance person to pick up the computer and carry it to the next desk.

This maintenance worker then telephones another support desk, which sends someone to plug the computer into the network. The plugger must then ring another support desk to get someone to plug the telephone extension in.

All these skilled manoeuvres must of course be signed for.

THE backdoor privatisation of the BBC continues. The latest bit to be "outsourced" — ie sold off — is the accounting system.

Thanks to the madness of producer choice, under which each department has to bill every other for its services, BBC accounting has become impossibly unwieldy. But it still works. Just. Now all that is set to change.

BBC managers are tendering for "service providers" to run the corporation accounts department under the fate-temptingly inappropriate rubric of "Project MIDAS". The shortlisted contenders are Andersen Consulting, Coopers & Lybrand, IBM and Touche Ross.

BBC Westminster hacks who had enjoyed a rowdy recent farewell party of a colleague, had their hangovers rudely interrupted by a stiff memo from management.

It warned them that the inland revenue would be informed about the evening's jollities, and as the bash had represented a form of payment in kind, it would be taxable. The bemused hacks were told to declare the event, and that they should expect to pay £5 in tax for their evening's fun.

Up at BBC Pebble Mill, meanwhile, employees who have to work so long without a break that sandwiches have to be brought to their desks have been told these "free lunches" will also be taxed. Now the peeved staff are looking forward to notification of tax payable on free cups of tea...

HOW THEY ARE RELATED

VIEWERS of the BBC2 series *Home Front* may have noticed the remarkable number of plugs for Jocasta Innes and her company "Paint Magic".

The editor of *Home Front* is Daisy Goodwin, already well known to *Eye* readers for her commitment to family values (two years ago, while producing BBC1's *Bookmark*, she included a handsome plug for a travel-book written by Jason Goodwin, her brother).

And what of the lucky Jocasta Innes? By an amazing coincidence, she is Daisy Goodwin's mother.

CAVERSHAM Monitoring, the BBC subsidiary that monitors BBC foreign coverage and sends out summaries of its news, was told *not* to cover the split between the BBC and Orbit Communications following the closure of the BBC's Arabic service.

The Arabic service was shut down after Orbit, BBC Worldwide's Arabic partner, pulled out of the contract over a *Panorama* programme on Arabic capital punishment. Caversham received the Stalinist instruction not to cover the split shortly afterwards: evidently, bad publicity can't be allowed in the new, commercially aware Birtist Beeb.

Various politicians have been pitching in to help the beleaguered staff, in particular the two journalists, one Algerian and one Sudanese, who face deportation when their contracts expire. Tony Benn, who spoke at a recent meeting, and David Steel, who sent a letter of support, both suggest the decision to close the service came directly from the government. Steel pleaded for the government to change its mind on the closure: "Is there any way in which Her Majesty's Government will alter its policy on this?"

A former staff member has now presented the Arabic service hacks, currently awaiting redundancy notices, with new job opportunities at Qatar TV. His ridiculously low pay offers are made slightly more attractive by his promise that the new Qatari station will have far more editorial independence than the BBC.

Meanwhile the Arabic staff have been given a meeting room called the Mandarin Room — so-called because it housed the BBC Mandarin service until that fell victim to political interference.

WHY did Michael Grade cancel the Channel 4 programme in which self-proclaimed psychoanalyst Dylan Evans put Princess Diana on the couch? Although the official explanation was that the film "just didn't work", it's just as likely C4 executives belatedly discovered what they should have known all along: that Dylan Evans is not quite what he seems.

Channel 4 billed him as a "prominent psychoanalyst", but the truth is he isn't even trained. According to a C4 press release, he "lectures" at Brunel University; according to Brunel, he has given only "three or four lectures to an MA seminar".

C4 also claims Evans is "affiliated" to something called the Centre for Freudian Analysis and Research in London. This "affiliation" means merely that he has recently embarked upon psychoanalytic training — a lengthy, arduous and costly business, normally taking several years to complete.

So who is this would-be media starlet? Evans, now 29, obtained a first-class degree from Southampton University in... linguistics. More recently, he did a one-year MA in psychoanalytic studies at Kent University, an entirely theory-based degree which does not qualify its graduates to practise. Nor is Evans registered with either of the two recognised, credible British organisations for shrinks, the UK Council of Psychotherapy and the British Confederation of Psychotherapists.

MUSEUM NEWS

ON 21 MAY, the London art dealers Spink & Son will be auctioning "an important collection of Renaissance and Baroque Medals and Plaquettes". It should be a memorable occasion.

As the catalogue boasts: "This is a dispersal the like of which has not been available to anyone in this field during their active lifetime." The 600 or so items on sale — billed only as the "property of a gentleman" — are expected to fetch at least £250,000.

The anonymous owner is in fact Timothy Clifford, director of the National Gallery of Scotland. But why the secrecy? After all, his earlier venture into the salerooms was conducted in a blaze of publicity — eclipsing even the Queen. On 3 July 1989, the very day when Her Majesty opened the redecorated National Gallery in Edinburgh, the hammer came down on "The Clifford Collection" of Old Master drawings at Sotheby's for a total of £550,000, a sum that caught the press's imagination in a way the royal visit did not. Clifford used the money to buy part of Tyninghame House, East Lothian, the former pile of the Earl of Haddington, where he and his wife now live in great splendour amid a stately clutter of antiques and *objets d'art*. He also owns a house in London, bought with the proceeds of a 16th-century drawing which he sold to the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC.

This time, however, he may be pushing his luck — which could explain why he has suddenly come over all coy.

As a long-standing member of the International Council of Museums and the Museums Association, Clifford must be aware that both these professional bodies have clear rules about conflicts of interest. Here, for instance, is rule 8.3 from ICOM's ethics code: "No member of the museum profession should participate in any dealing (buying or selling for profit) in objects similar or related to the objects collected by the employing museum." And here is rule 6.5 of the Museums Association: "Museum professionals must not deal (buy or sell for profit) in material covered by the institution's collecting policy."

To emphasise that he was playing it strictly by the book, Sotheby's sale catalogue for "The Clifford Collection" included a sycophantic introduction by *Telegraph* hack Godfrey Barker claiming that Clifford had stopped collecting drawings in 1975, the year before he became assistant keeper of prints and drawings at the British Museum. The image of Clifford as a disinterested collector was also promoted at the time by his wife, Jane, who told a *Telegraph* interviewer her husband had always "scrupulously" bought from outside the collection of the museums he happened to be working in.

Even if Clifford did indeed stop buying Old Masters when he joined the British Museum, he would still have been in apparent breach of the rules since his previous two jobs — from 1968 to 1976, when most of the drawings were bought — were at Manchester City Art Gallery and the V&A, both of which have important collections of Old Master drawings. Nevertheless, the lucrative sale of the Clifford Collection passed off without raised eyebrows, at least in public. (It is worth noting, however, that since then he has failed to become director of the British Museum and the V&A.)

Since coming to Edinburgh in the mid-1980s, Clifford has "scrupulously" persuaded his museum to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds indulging his passion for Renaissance medals — which he has been collecting privately since 1963. During the past decade, the National Gallery of Scotland has acquired more than 100 commemorative bronze medals and plaquettes, which it had not collected at all before Clifford's arrival as director. As if that weren't enough, in 1994 he hired from the US "The Currency of Fame", an expensive exhibition of Renaissance portrait medals which were heavily promoted as an "unjustly neglected art form".

That neglect is now at an end: thanks to Clifford's endeavours at the National Gallery, the market in medals is buoyant — which is good news indeed for the "gentleman" whose collection is being sold in London later this month.

In an introduction to the catalogue for next week's sale, one Richard Falkner writes that "this collection, begun in 1963, was formed with enthusiasm and discernment, to which I can testify... For myself it has been a joy to have assisted this process in a small way." What Falkner omits to mention is that he is not only a close friend of Clifford but also a prominent medal dealer who sold him several of the items that are now to be auctioned. More interestingly still, Falkner has also benefited from the National Gallery of Scotland's sudden interest in acquiring medals and plaquettes: in 1993, for example, the gallery paid him no less than £35,000 for eight "rare" medals. His total earnings from the Gallery's buying policy are thought to be well over £70,000. No wonder he is so happy to pay tribute to his chum's "enthusiasm and discernment".

Clifford's disregard for the ethical codes of the ICOM and the Museums Association could hardly be more flagrant. As a civil servant, he is also subject to the Nolan committee's recommendations, which lay down unambiguous rules about the need to avoid conflicts of interest. It is a mystery why the trustees of the National Gallery of Scotland — who include Lord Macfarlane of Bearsden, the man brought in to clean up Guinness after Ernest Saunders — tolerate this misconduct. Perhaps it is time for Scottish secretary Michael Forsyth to start asking them some embarrassing questions.

MINI

HACKWATCH

TO JUDGE by his column in the *Daily Express*, Anthony Holden — "Britain's Top Royal Writer" — has no truck with the idea of abolishing the monarchy.

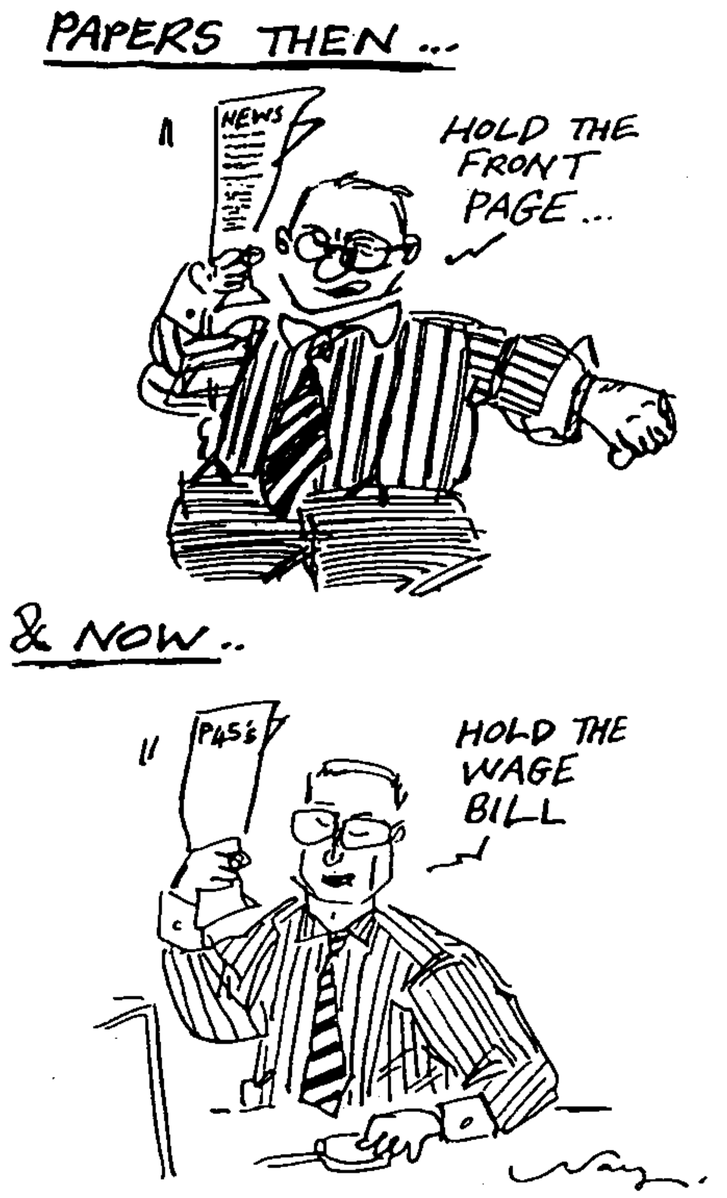
On 12 February, for instance, he noted gleefully that "Labour knows in its blood-red heart that any threat to tamper with the monarchy could blow its chances of forming the next government... The Queen and the institution she symbolises seem safe."

On 26 February he sneered at republicans as "a thin line of wishful thinkers who have signally failed to capitalise on the Windsors' woes".

On 18 March he thought it "worth noting, in these dangerous republican days, the bold thesis of Frank Prochaska's recent book, *Royal Bounty*, that royal involvement in... charitable causes is saving the welfare state from collapse."

On 22 April he made his position even clearer: "Count Nikolai Tolstoy... upbraids me in these pages for suggesting that 'sexual misdemeanours within the royal family provide justification for abolishing the monarchy'. As regular readers will bear witness, I have never suggested any such thing... For my part, of course, I am merely an impartial observer."

Of course. How wise of Holden not to distress his beloved *Express* readers by revealing that he is in fact a founder-member of the Common Sense Club, a group of republican agitators who meet every month to plot the overthrow of the monarchy.



DOING THE ROUNDS

"I AM quite astounded that it was allowed to happen and that no action is being taken. In my 20-odd years as a union official, I have never seen anything quite like this in a public service."

So said Jim McNeil, regional Unison officer covering **Falkirk's Westbank Day hospital**, where Morag McClaren was appointed to the position of charge nurse after coming through a tough interview from her nurse-manager husband Graham.

Central Scotland healthcare trust (CSHT) has conceded that such overt nepotism is "totally reprehensible" and occurred "despite clear guidance and advice to the contrary"; but outgoing human resources manager Alastair Barron has refused to overturn the appointment or reinterview with an impartial panel. By way of punishment, Graham McClaren has been promoted to acting nursing services manager.

Another of CSHT's senior nursing managers, Ravin Bukseeth, walked out of Mrs McClaren's interview in disgust and has resigned after being demoted to charge nurse. He joins the community care director, the contracts manager and the business managers for learning difficulties and mental health in a recent management culling. As the £88,000 (and rising) chief executive Derek Pollacchi says: "Our staff are our greatest asset." Perhaps he means the trust's £5,000 non-executive director Bill Hughes, who by coincidence happens to be treasurer of the Scottish Tories.

● DENISE ROGERS has sent an interesting memo to surgical managers at **St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey**. "It is understood that the Health Commission [ie the old health authority] are not purchasing reversal of sterilisation/ reversal of vasectomy this year. This does not apply to fundholding practices as reversals are now an eligible fundholding procedure."

Meanwhile David Grace, a consultant surgeon at **Enfield's Chase Farm trust**, has written to non-fundholding GP Dr Rajendra Singh to explain why one of his patients in considerable pain is waiting four months for an appointment. "Much against our better judgement, we have been persuaded to see all new GP fundholding 'consortium' patients within four weeks of referral." So everyone else waits four months.

● TIMES are hard at **London's St George's healthcare trust** where David Randon, project director of food services, has issued a bread and milk supplies ultimatum to all ward managers. "Milk will be issued at the rate of two thirds of a pint per patient per day and bread at two slices per patient per day. Extra milk and bread will only be issued by requisition with the following information: "1. The person authorising the extra supply. 2. A budget code 3. The ward name."

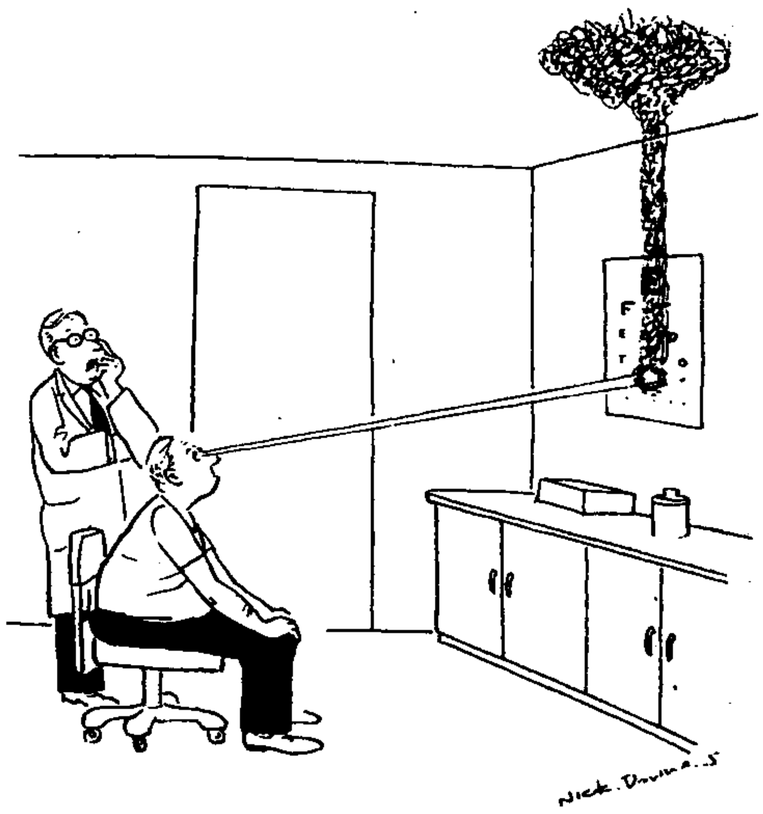
● MANAGERS at the doomed **Edgware general hospital**, due close in a year, have issued staff with brand new bleeps costing £72,000 "in order to comply with EEC regulations." The old bleeps, which have worked perfectly well for ten years, contain mercury in their batteries which could prove fatal if a fatigued junior doctor mistook his bleep for a cheese sandwich and ate it. The new bleeps are mercury-free and also have a flashing red light on them so they can be located in the dark. Very useful if you drop yours in the wound.

● FUNDHOLDING GPs at the new **Helensburgh health centre** in **Dumbarton** have done rather well out of the scheme. In the first year of operation their budget was so generous they made £103,708 profit. As the minutes of the practice meeting on 10 May 1993 put it: "Dr Robin and Peter had pleasant negotiations with Miss Oldroyd at Glasgow health board, and it was decided that the practice would keep £57,000."

The good doctors (McBlane, Morrice, Robin, Macleod, McLachlan and Morris) weren't so lucky in their second year, overspending by £23,307. This was caused by patients who selfishly indulged themselves in "excessive long term illness".

Things have perked up and in September 1995 further savings of £49,000 were announced. This taxpayers' money has been put to good use helping to fund new consulting rooms and furniture for the new premises.

● IT'S official. **Sunderland** is the worst provided area for GPs in the country, with 19.8 percent fewer than average. Doctors at **Ashburn medical centre** operate out of brand new premises and hit all their health promotion targets. Since advertising for a new partner in November in all the national medical journals, they have received as many as, er, zero applications. As senior partner Dr Cliff Nelson said: "What can we do?"



"You might want to lay off the carrots"

● IN 1992 **Greenwich healthcare trust** established a limited company, **GWH Ltd**, to generate profits through the purchase of medical equipment for the trust. It also provided car leasing, lottery, pay roll and advertising services. Thus far it has lost £550,000. Guess who's picking up the tab...

● **SOUTH Birmingham Health Authority**'s managers said they had to balance the books when they sacked 1,000 staff and closed wards... and the authority has now emerged as the country's biggest spender on staff cars — £1.7 million last year, compared with the national average of £219,000. Some are, of course, used by health professionals such as midwives, but the biggest and most expensive went to the managers appointed since the government's health "reforms", with some getting up to £20,000 a year each in transport allowances.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

CENTRAL to the Maffia (ministry of agriculture) plan to "restore public confidence" after the BSE debacle is a scheme to register young beef cattle from BSE-free herds.

To do the leg work it is relying on 5,000-plus private vets who act as its local veterinary inspectors (LVIs). They will be paid to inspect farm records and certify animals as BSE-free.

Not unlike lawyers, vets have never been slow coming forward when there is easy money to be made. In an unprecedented move, however, the vets' trade union, aka the British Veterinary Association, has advised members to boycott the scheme.

This sudden reticence has nothing to do with professional scruples, however. More pertinent is the seemingly relentless attack by officials on LVIs and other vets doing their routine work.

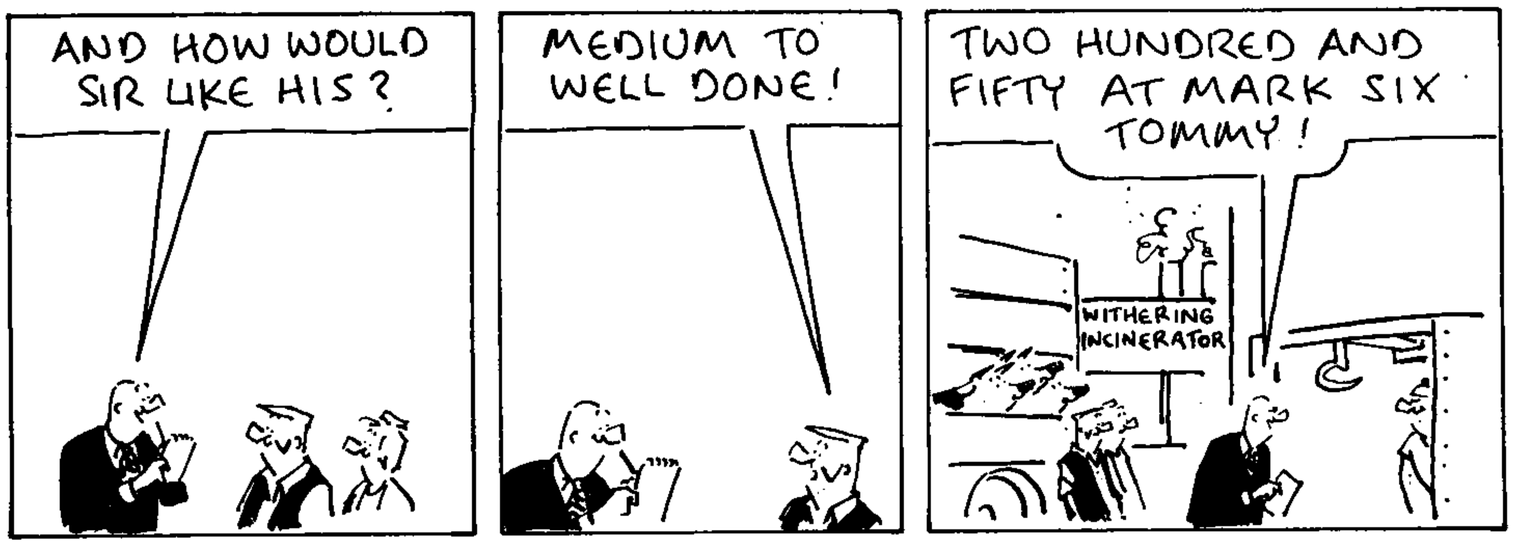
First in a long line to suffer the attentions of mad officials was Roger Eddy, the Wiltshire vet who was prosecuted for allegedly being responsible for causing unnecessary suffering to a pig sent to slaughter (*Eyes passim*). Latest victim was Irish vet Liam McCullough, who last month was prosecuted, with Maffia help, by Cumbria trading standards officers. Sheep, apparently certified as fit by McCullough, had been found in a Carlisle market suffering from severe foot rot — so severe a blind man could have spotted it. When it was shown how easy it was to change identification marks on sheep and "recycle" health certificates to cover different batches, the trial collapsed.

With seven prosecutions having been taken in the last two years, all of them having failed, private vets could be forgiven for thinking they are being got at and withdrawing their services.

'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

ALBERT



IMMIGRATION UPDATE

WHAT became of Mircea Ilin, the Romanian-born immigrant who came to Britain seeking political asylum from the regime in his country which had consistently imprisoned and tortured him?

Last December the *Eye* (887) set out the history of his persecution in Romania, the refusal of his application for asylum by the British home office, his happy marriage to a British health worker and his threat to throw himself from a fourth-floor window when the home office deportation mob burst into his home after smashing his front door to pieces.

The heavy mob — known as the Gardner Group, after the Jamaican woman, Joy Gardner, who was killed while they tried to deport her — withdrew to prevent the suicide, and Mr Ilin went into hiding. Ever since, the Gardner Group has been secretly following his wife and tapping her telephone. Finally last month it tracked her to a hostel in north London where he was hiding.

Ten members of the group burst into the hostel, seized their prey and took him to Holloway Road police station. When Mrs Ilin finally found out where he was, she went to the police station but was consistently refused permission to see him. Her husband was whipped off to Rochester detention centre where he is locked up for 12 hours out of 24. Mrs Ilin has got permission to take the case to the high court for judicial review, but the home office still says it will deport him any day.

The significance of the case is its similarity to that of Bernard and Hilda Howard, who came to this country in the 1930s seeking political asylum from the Romanian regime to which they were vehemently opposed. The Howards were granted asylum, built up a successful business in South Wales and were able to send their son to Cambridge. The ambitious boy later qualified for the Bar, joined the Tory party and eventually became home secretary — renowned chiefly for locking people up and deporting dissidents who flee to Britain and beg for asylum.

THE
Rotten Borough Advertiser
Friday, 17 May 1996

OUT OF AFRICA, INTO HACKNEY

IAN MACDONALD QC's long-awaited "independent" inquiry into recruitment fraud in corruption-ridden, Labour-controlled Hackney has uncovered many of the points the *Eye* has been making for more than two years.

According to the QC's report: "There is no doubt that the cases of fraud and corruption indicate a degree of organisation and networking among African communities in Hackney, and that some of the organisers could be properly described as professional fraudsters."

Nevertheless the inquiry — supported only by the ruling Labour group — has so far failed to identify those in the town hall (or recently departed) who actually employed illegal and grossly underqualified African immigrants. Instead it has continued the "let's stitch up housing director Bernard Crofton" line supported by those involved with the scam and the ousted former regime of John McCafferty.

It was Crofton, of course, who was brave enough to challenge the council's African mafia, responsible for much of the recruitment fraud, only to be suspended on trumped-up grounds of racism. Now, unbelievably, the QC Macdonald has accused Crofton of being a "liar" and recommended he be dismissed or face police action.

Macdonald is particularly upset that Crofton claims he was tipped off that he was going to be suspended by a fellow barrister, housing law expert Andrew Arden. Crofton claims he and Arden met in Crofton's local where the barrister told him: "They [council leaders] are out to get you." Arden, who failed to give evidence during Crofton's appeal, but who is giving evidence to Macdonald, is now denying the conversation took that form.

Coincidentally former council leader McCafferty is the legal guardian to Arden's children; and from 1990-94, a period during which McCafferty was in power, Arden received £114,585 worth of work as counsel to Hackney council while Ian Macdonald, the current inquiry chief, carried out work worth £65,475.

● ONE of Macdonald's more ridiculous discoveries is the so-called 10-day rule used when appointing those whose references need to be sent from overseas. If the references arrive within 10 days and are acceptable, the applicant gets the job. But if the papers don't arrive within 10 days, the applicant, er, gets the job anyway!

IN BRIEF

BENT: Labour wants to change the council's name to Willesden & Wembley as the new leaders feel the name "Bent" won't win voters' confidence. Why not name the authority after the better known local district, Neasden?

WESTMINSTER: Congrats to Robert and Maria-Louise Burness, whose application to expand their Mayfair fish restaurant was said to breach planning limits on restaurant use. The proposal has been nodded through by determined Tories and the value of the site has rocketed. Maria-Louise, a daughter of Lord Forte, is sister of Olga Polizzi, former vice-chairman of Westminster's planning committee and a dedicated Tory donor.

LEWISHAM: Social services staff in Forest Hill were told to leave Kingswear House in March after the council admitted ceiling tiles contained 50 per cent deadly brown asbestos — despite four investigations that said there was no asbestos. The last was by borough surveyor Andy Childs, who still works in the architect's department. Kingswear House is believed to have been built in the 60s, but the architects lost the exact details.

RED FACE OF THE YEAR

SOME Westminster council taxpayers were strolling through the Bois de Vincennes on the outskirts of Paris recently when they were surprised to see the familiar face of Tory councillor Peter Martindale.

It wasn't the coincidence of meeting him while on a picnic in Paris that surprised them; rather it was his attire. Not only was Coun Martindale in a part of the park notorious for being the French answer to Hampstead Heath, but he was sporting only a black furled umbrella and a pair of turquoise underpants.

Coun Martindale was somewhat fazed when the Westminster taxpayers tried to discuss local government with him. He explained he had come to France to observe how Eurostar was working and hurried off in the opposite direction.

SURVEY GATHERS DUST...

IT LOOKS like residents of East Kilbride have been the victim of a cover-up over the discovery of asbestos in flats in the new town's Telford Road area.

As the *Eye* recently revealed, asbestos was discovered when repair work was done a few years ago. Yet as long ago as 1983 the Scottish office advised East Kilbride development corporation, which was then responsible for the homes, to check for asbestos. A survey was duly carried out but it now turns out that politicians and officers "lost" the results and, conveniently, can't remember anything about the findings.

Since the council was first told to look for asbestos many tenants have bought their properties from the authorities — properties whose value has now dropped greatly. Only a cynic would suggest that the authorities kept quiet about the results of the asbestos survey so they could rid themselves of some dodgy properties.

So who is responsible for this mess? East Kilbride development corporation, which over the last 50 years created, planned and built the new town, has now been wound up with assets of £429.5 million, having made a profit of £137.4 million. Its functions were recently taken over by East Kilbride district council, but to complicate matters further that too was recently wound up and subsumed into the new unitary authority of South Lanarkshire. No wonder the residents feel they have little control over their affairs.

JUNKET OF THE WEEK

WHILE Renfrewshire Labour councillors axed plans for an outdoor centre for deprived children, the new provost Nancy Allison flew to Germany, courtesy of the penniless council, for the retirement beano of an official of twin town Furth. She denied it was a junket. "All it cost was the air fare... Everything else including my hotel costs were paid by my hosts." Then there was the cost of providing laptop computers for senior Labour councillors to use at home — £11,000 — plus planned new council offices costing up to £1 million. No wonder the children's outdoor centre is on hold.

AXES TO GRIND...

IN Liverpool, the Chicago of the north, local councillors are being embroiled in the violence and criminality engulfing the city.

Liberal (not Lib Dem) councillor Keith McCullough alleges he was attacked by two men with axes. His claim that they returned to his house a few days later and threatened him with guns is being investigated by Knacker. The mystery assailants apparently phone in advance to say they are calling.

While McCullough faces social security fraud charges, Steve Radford, his Liberal (not Lib Dem) partner on the council, has had acid poured over his car on more than one occasion.

For the Liberal Democrats proper, Coun Jim Thomson resigned his seat on 8 March and promptly began a career in bank robbery three days later. He chose a bank in Aigburth, the ward he had represented, and was collared by police on his third visit as he returned to a taxi which had taken him to the bank. After his solicitor said he had confessed to what he had done, magistrates granted him conditional bail while he awaits crown court.

In Melrose ward Lib Dem nominee John Dunn was forced to stand down from this year's local election when it emerged that he had previous. This included a one-year jail term for posing as a nurse, making bomb hoax calls and eight other convictions. Labour put out a leaflet denouncing the Lib Dems for nominating a candidate with a criminal past, but it had itself taken Petrona Lashley off its councillors' panel a while back to stop her becoming deputy mayor out of embarrassment over her past convictions for fraud and prostitution. She has since been forgiven and reinstated — now that her chance for mayoral office has passed.

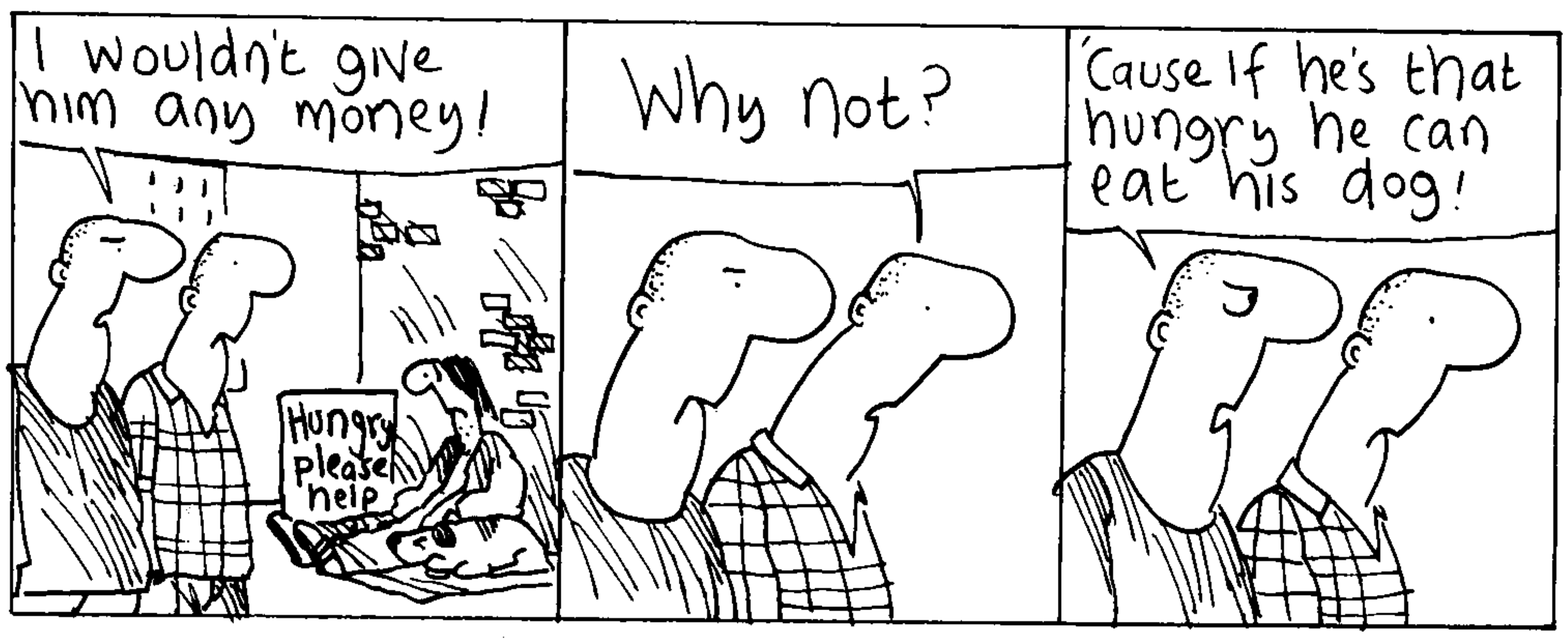
INVESTORS are still throwing money into ostrich farming following farmers' claims that they can make returns of more than 100 per cent a year.

Prospective investors should take note, however, of the recent closure of the Ostrich Farming Corporation by the department of trade and industry (*Eye* 896). The company offered no compensation scheme protection to investors and slipped through regulatory loopholes.

Even so, this might not be enough to put off potential investors who see healthy ostrich meat as a possible replacement to British beef following the BSE panic. These people ought to know about the first report of a non-mammalian case of spongiform encephalopathy, which was made in the *Veterinary Record* on 21 September 1991.

The vet's paper disclosed that an ostrich in a German zoo had been diagnosed with the disease. Although this single case hardly constitutes an outbreak, it is certainly, er, food for thought (*That's enough tired old clichés. Ed*).

HUSBAND



Letters

Private Eye

Praise of songs

Sir,

Though the appalling Cardiff Bay Opera scheme may have one supporter (R. Harries, EYE *3 May), it'll have to count without mine. For many years I have enjoyed opera at the existing venue (Cardiff New Theatre) without ever being aware of inadequate facilities compromising the performance quality, and regard the smallish auditorium as a benefit to the enjoyment of opera rather than a problem for ticket sales.*

While it is true prices are cheap by London standards, I would have expected that genuine demand for the scale of operation implied by Cardiff Bay Opera would have long since translated into higher prices and a season lasting rather more than eight weeks a year. I also find the present location immeasurably preferable for being in with the night life (as with other opera houses around the world) rather than isolated in some dismal waterfront parking lot.

Yours faithfully,
R.A. JONES,
Sawbridgeworth, Herts.

Cottage industry

Sir,

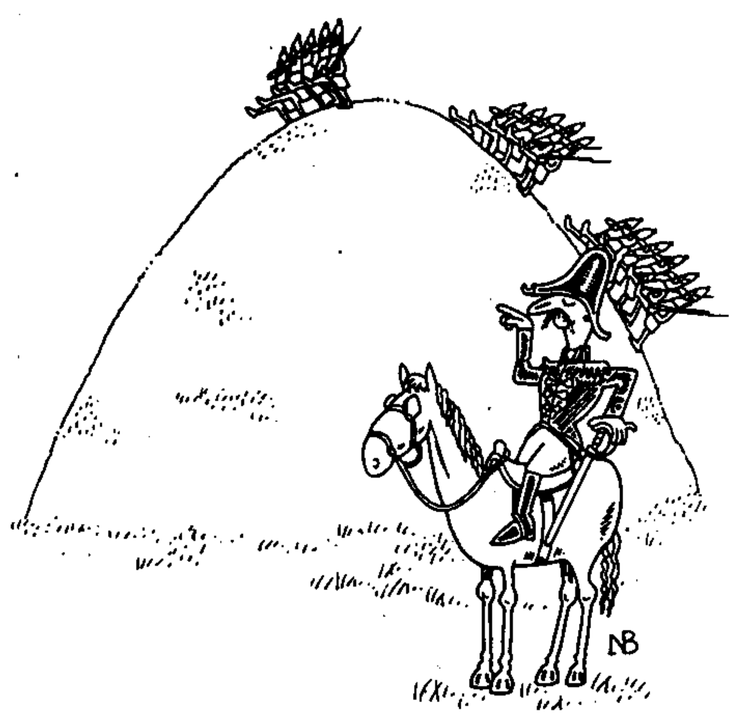
How interesting that Camden councillor David Horan (896 "Taken for grant aid") should portray himself as a defender of "...dedicated and efficient staff", protecting the interest of vulnerable people... refugees from Yugoslavia, Kurdistan, Ethiopia..."

In 1993-94 Mr Horan did his best to attempt to close down a small (and then not funded) community centre in Swiss Cottage (Camden), while the dedicated and efficient unpaid staff struggled to keep the service open for Yugoslavian and Kurdish waiters and cooks in the community canteen, Ethiopian and Eritrean families and children, local pensioners, disabled and other vulnerable people resident in Camden.

No Tory bigot could have matched the hypocrisy of some members of the Camden Labour Group that year.

Yours faithfully (and Labour voting),
GIULIANA BECCIU,
Secretary of Swiss Cottage MC 1994-5.

Pre-School Nursery Facility Rhymes



The gay old Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men,
Which was fine and had no ill effects
on morale, discipline, or their
ability to march up
and down hill again.

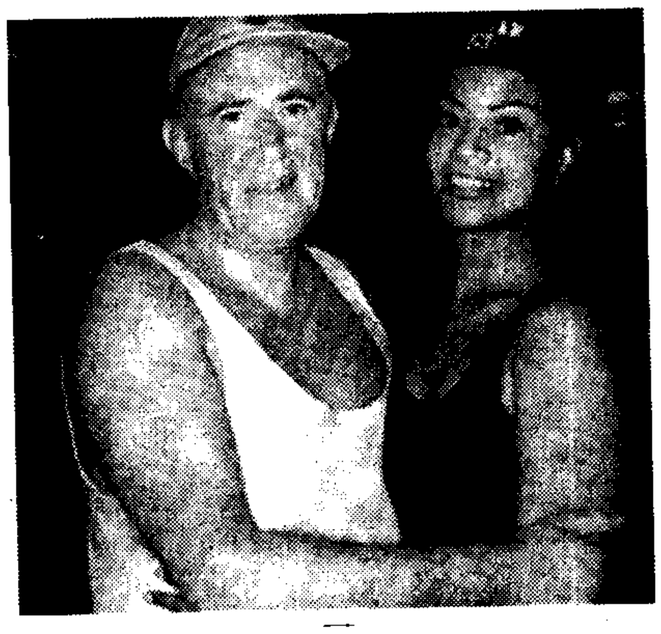
Row rage

Sir,

C.P. Dixon's letter (897) re: "Those Boat Race Crews in Full" serves sad notice on the demise of humour over at North Fens Poly (formerly the University of Cambridge). Please remind "The Vice-Captain, Cantabridgian Rowing Club" that in future he should not advertise this fact.

Yours sincerely,
BEN ROWLAND,
Balliol College, Oxford.

PS: While we're at it, I believe the aged Cambridge stroke was seen at the post boat race ball cavorting with the cox, still wearing his rowing singlet. Do you have any photographic evidence of this?



Queen of heartless

Sir,

Re: Diana wanders round Harefield (3 May). I write to you as a parent who suffered a tragic loss at the Harefield Hospital some seven years ago. I am angry at the fact that Diana was allowed to wander round the operating theatre though not surprised that she sought to do it.

I wonder what would have been Diana's reaction on finding out that I had been wandering round the operating theatre while one of her sons had been undergoing intensive heart surgery? And if the outcome were tragic? Is she ever going to stop all this nonsense and get herself a serious and responsible job?

Yours truly,
JOHN W.S. PRESTON,
South Croydon, Surrey.

Liquid assets

Sir,

Perhaps you would permit me to correct a few inaccuracies in your recent mention of The Glenfiddich Awards — specifically the fatuous suggestion that the Drink Writer of the Year category was rigged (896).

In the past 26 years shortlists have ranged from two to four nominees or, on occasions, closed altogether when the submitted work has proved not to be of a sufficient calibre.

You imply that the judges submit the entries; not so. The writers, publishers, broadcasters and producers submit the material. You point out that "the drink judge (sic)... is generally the previous year's winner", before going on to observe that "this year, however, the judge (sic) was Allan Cheesman"; not so. Allan was one of four judges, along with last year's Glenfiddich Trophy Winner, author and OBSERVER *writer Nigel Slater, writer and humorist Alan Coren, and London restaurateur Jeremy King. You suggest that the award to Jancis Robinson was somehow corruptly engineered as a result of her work for* SAINSBURY'S MAGAZINE*; not so. She was shortlisted for her work in* THE FINANCIAL TIMES *— any commercial link with Sainsbury's was both incidental and patently irrelevant.*

Finally, the judges were all big boys, more than capable of making up their own minds on whose work should be honoured. I can assure you that they were magnanimous and scrupulously correct in reaching their final decision.

Yours faithfully,
LINDSAY STEWART,
Administrator of The Glenfiddich Awards.

Flat denial

Sir,

Re Piloti on Leopold Buildings, Bethnal Green.

1. Leopold Buildings was not built in 1860/61 by Henry Darbyshire for the Society for the Improving of the Condition of the Labouring Classes, but in 1872 by Sydney Waterlow and Matthew Allen (based on earlier designs by Henry Roberts) for the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company.

2. After the death of the company Leopold Buildings was taken over by Greencoat Properties, who allowed them to deteriorate into such a dangerous and deplorable state that the residents petitioned the council in 1962 to take them over under a compulsory purchase order. The council has subsequently done everything it could within the very limited amount of money available to it to keep the building in a good state of repair.

3. The architecture is NOT*, despite your assertion, "being mutilated".*

4. For example: the front balconies are being retained and none of the iron balustrades are being removed. As for the chimney pieces, the original fireplaces were gone before the borough acquired the building and most of the external chimney stacks were removed as unsafe in 1962.

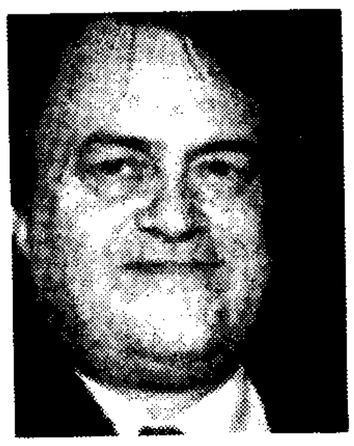
5. English Heritage is providing grant aid to help us to restore the original front facade. None of the new features, including gardens, are being financed by English Heritage.

6. Refurbishment proposals have been drawn up in consultation with a number of outside bodies, including English Heritage. When the scheme is finished, part of it will be leased by a housing association.

In short, we are doing all we can to make the flats modern and habitable without damaging their historic character. I would have hoped that we would have earned your praise rather than your ill-informed and spiteful condemnation.

CLLR PHIL MAXWELL,
Chair, Housing Services Committee, Tower Hamlets.

Lookalike



Lightyear

Prescott

Sir,

I have been struck by the remarkable resemblance between "New" Labour's middle-class deputy leader John Prescott and Buzz Lightyear, hero of the film TOY STORY.

Surely they must be related?

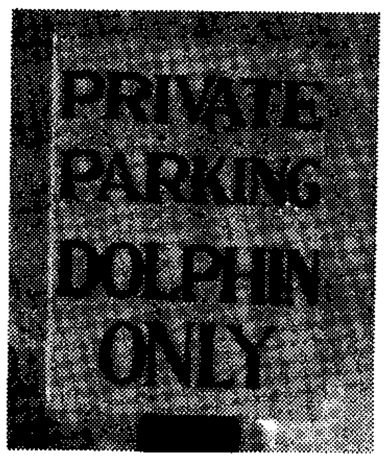
Yours faithfully,
J. PAGE,
Llandrindod Wells, Powys.

Lose change

Sir,

Councillor Phil Maxwell, ex-chair of the housing committee on Tower Hamlets council, knows perfectly well that it is impossible for councillors to "lose" any money, let alone £4.3 million, without the active collusion of council officers. Since the chief executive of Globe Tower Neighbourhood at the time of the alleged "loss" is now a departmental director for the current Labour administration, surely all Coun Maxwell has to do to trace the money is ask him where it went. Since, though, this whole piece of nonsense is just another wheeze to try to discredit the Liberals I doubt such a simple course of action will be followed.

Yours faithfully,
ERIC FLOUNDERS,
Former Liberal Councillor and Leader of the Council, Tower Hamlets.



I-SPY

Submitted by Alison Shine. *£10 paid for similar submissions. (SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Offal letter

Sir,

In rebuttal (897) New Muckspreader's hypotheses exceed those of your correspondents on the BSE issue. I am concerned at Muck's misrepresentation of my remarks. I did not "necessarily suggest" (sic) a cause and effect relationship derived from waning BSE incidence following the order excluding neuro-offal from cattle feedstuff. I specifically stated that feeding this material to essentially herbivorous animals may not be the SOLE *mode of infection. Neither I, nor others better placed than me, can deny that his warble fly hypothesis may be a route of prion transmission. So, too, might ixodid ticks or even the common housefly for all that is presently known about the transmission of prion disease. Another theory he sarcastically reviews is the role of organophosphorus dips, now suspected of involvement in a malaise among agricultural workers. It may be a predisposing factor although this seems unlikely to relate to BSE.*

Intra-species transmission by ingestion is a recognised cause of the prion disease, Kuru, the incidence of which has fallen since the practice of the females of a cannibalistic tribe eating the brains of its deceased tribal members ceased. As for trans-species transmission of prior disease it will suffice to point to experimental murine transmission and, I believe, feline transmission that has been established.

Yours faithfully,
J.P. WALSH, FIBMS,
London E4.

Boy-cott

Sir,

I should like to share with you my feelings regarding your reluctance to print my contributions to your various columns, in particular "Colemanballs" and "Letters".

It has come to my attention that this is because I am a woman. This is obviously sexist. I should know because I am a woman and am doing "Women's Studies" with the "Open University".

Using my skills of observation and detection, I have noted that issue 897 contained letters from such readers as Eric, Geoffrey, Gareth, Colin, Andrew, Robert, Geoff, Geoffrey and Phil. The "OBN" was from Nigel. The "Colemanballs" were from Noel, Roy and David and "Funny Old World" from Stuart and George. I found only two entries from women, Mrs Hobbs and Ms Cain, who are probably your aunties.

Yours oppressed,
ANGELA O'BRIEN,
Danesmoor, Derbyshire.

Have mersey upon us

Sir,

In the EYE *again to correct factual inaccuracies again:*

1. Public sector financial support stipulated outputs under a number of headings, every one has been exceeded;

2. European support required us to contribute significantly to the image of Merseyside; recently we were selected as one of the four nominations for a gold medal by the Liverpool Publicity Association;

3. We have gladly adhered to Liverpool City Challenge's job recruitment procedures and guidelines;

4. All Merseyside applicants were seen and not screened prior to audition, an exception not made for any other area of the world;

5. We have a higher percentage of Liverpool students than either of the existing universities;

6. The remark I made in its entirety: "We are elitist; we want the best. If you've got what it takes, we'd like to see you."

Boring isn't it? But then with the truth you wouldn't have a story.

All the best,
MARK FEATHERSTONE-WITTY,
Chief Executive, The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

Anagram

Sir,

One hopes the New York officials hearing sordid accusations of breast juggling with the appendages of a former employee against the bearded tycoon, Richard Branson, read nothing into the fact his name is an anagram of: "Corr... hands in bra."

Yours,
IAN RUTT,
London SE9.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"You seem to be a man who likes to keep his feet on the ground — you sail a lot."
ALAN TITCHMARSH, BBC1
(Nigel Macknight)

"Abattoirs don't make a killing..."
Abattoir director Mr Duggins
(Andrew Lee)

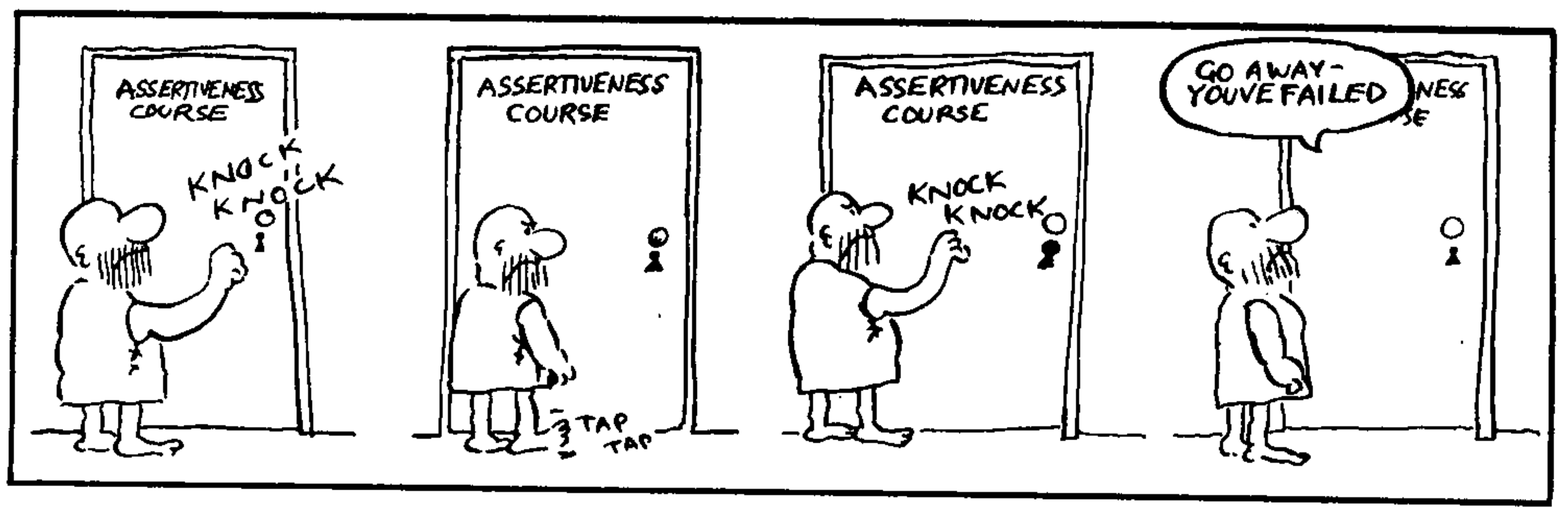
"My life is so full of surprises, nothing surprises me any more."
KIM WILDE, Classic-FM
(Angela O'Brien)

"It's like learning to play golf. Just when you think you've cracked it, they move the goalposts."
ADRIAN LOVE, Southern Counties Radio
(Roy Asser)

David Vine: *He's playing like a world champion.*
John Virgo: *Well, he is a world champion.*
BBC2
(Alastair Blair)

HOM SAP

AUSTIN



"Rubens said if I don't put on a few more pounds my career as a model is over!"

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

DESPITE the lofty environmental ideals expressed by Euro leaders at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, Eurocrats in Brussels have developed alarming amnesia with regard to Brazil.

The European parliament's attempts to alert the commission and council to blatant violations of territorial rights in Amazonia have fallen on deaf ears.

Brazil's new president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, issued a decree — Decree 1775 — in January which it is feared will lead to the genocide of its remaining indigenous population and to the destruction of yet more rainforest. Survival International claims the decree gives settlers, miners and loggers the right to "challenge" demarcations and occupy Indian land.

An urgent resolution to impose sanctions on the Brazilian government to force it to protect its tribal territories was voted through by Liberal, Socialist and United European Left MEPs in February. Their resolution called "on the council and the commission to make the Brazilian authorities aware of their disapproval, to demand guarantees concerning funding of the reserved areas... and to make consideration of... the indigenous people an obligatory part of their political, economic and trade relations with Brazil".

However, a Mr Jorgensen, who represents environment commissioner Rit Bjerresgaard, said: "I haven't got a clue about that." He added: "Indians are not considered part of the environment." He suggested contacting commission vice-president Manuel Marin, responsible for relations with South America, through his spokesman Señor Josep Coll i Carbo.

Señor Carbo was even more in the dark and proposed referring the matter back to Mr Jorgensen. He commented: "You shouldn't take much notice of this... The parliament makes resolutions every day. There are dozens on the Lebanon, Israel... all I can say is that this resolution has not affected the relations between Europe and Brazil... The system is managed by civil servants and it is only when matters are very sensitive that they arrive at the commission."

However, when the *Eye* pointed out that Germany had donated US$ 22 million to fund the demarcation of Indian land and which could now be used to destroy it, Señor Carbo replied: "You have really trapped me there." The best thing to do, he concluded, was to contact the "Portuguese diplomatic mission". More disconcertingly, the European parliament's president of environmental affairs, Kenneth Collins, was no more informed than Jorgensen or Carbo. He proposed trying vice-president of the commission Leon Brittan — but he was on a tour of the Far East until 13 May. A spokesman then suggested contacting Señor Coll I Carbo who would know all about it...

Brazil's Indians are leaving nothing to chance. More than 300 of their leaders described the new decree as "sure genocide" and called for a suspension of credit for the Brazilian government. As the *Eye* went to press a delegation representing CAPOIB (Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples of the Brazilian Amazon) was due in Europe to lobby the politicians themselves — turning up in the flesh perhaps being more effective than worthless resolutions from the European parliament when one's survival is at stake.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

"We were called to the Samantha Hotel by the owner of the restaurant next door," a spokesman for the Taiwanese police told a press conference in Kaohsiung. "He'd found two people on top of his now-demolished banqueting table and naturally assumed that there had been a fight. When we looked, we found the couple lying there. They'd both broken their legs and arms, but they were still able to tell us this was their fifth attempt today to commit suicide.

"Huang, a 27-year-old soldier, and his 26-year-old transvestite boyfriend Chang were in love. Both sets of parents were opposed to their relationship, and when Huang and Chang heard about two teenage lovers who recently committed suicide in Chiayi, they thought that they would have a go too. First, they stuck their heads in plastic bags for an afternoon but this only caused them to vomit. Next, they drove their car off the Central Cross-Island Highway, but they missed the water and ended up, unharmed, in a valley. So they hired a room on the 12th floor of the Samantha hotel, to kill themselves properly. They tried hanging themselves with nooses made from bedsheets and tied to ceiling rods, but when they jumped they brought the ceiling down (nearly killing the resident above them). Then they tried to exterminate themselves with the gas fire. They were sick again but eventually passed out. However, the meter ran out, and they woke up with headaches so bad they wanted to commit suicide immediately. So they decided to jump, but didn't notice the five-storey restaurant beneath their window. They smashed through the tin roof and wrecked a lobster tank. Huang had 40 toothpicks in his bottom. They won't be getting up to any tricks for a while." *(China Post, 23/4/96. Spotter — Chris MacDonald)*

—o—

"The trouble with the NPFL is that, in battle, they may capture a street corner, but then they go for a beer, and when they come back they're surprised to find they've lost it again," Lemuel Potty told reporters in Monrovia. "They're rubbish, but at least they're better disciplined than their rivals, the Krahn. They go into battle wearing women's wigs, necklaces and rubber overcoats."

Potty, a National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) sympathiser who owns a nightclub in the Mamba Point district, was describing the civil war raging in his country, which has so far killed over 150,000 people. "I'm not saying the war isn't going full pelt. There are quite a lot of dead people lying in the streets, but actually the gunmen are far more interested in looting luxury goods than killing each other. Shops selling trainers were the first to be looted, but they also like robbing tailors' shops. The NPFL wear brightly-coloured sailors' life vests, or T-shirts they've looted from the Save the Children Fund. Their basic look is ghetto rap musician. You can always spot them because they all wear blue berets, stolen from the Army and Navy store, but the Krahn are more flamboyant. One Krahn fighter dresses in wellington boots and a woman's headscarf, and calls himself Lieutenant Colonel Double Trouble. They do their real fighting in the countryside. When they come to Monrovia, they don't really come to fight. They come to shop." *(Eastern Express, 24/4/96. Spotter — George H. Adams)*

—o—

"Duct tape is the handyman's secret weapon," said Red Green, as he hosted the Things You Can Make With Duct Tape contest on his tv show in Fairbanks, Alaska. "It works, it's cheap, and it's versatile, and that's why I'm proud to announce the results of this year's competition.

"In third place is Juanita Benefield with her hubcap-duct-tape-tire-jack frying pan. In second place, the Fairbanks Possum Lodge Women's Auxiliary, who've said goodbye to painless but expensive wax treatments and now rid themselves of unwanted hair by ripping it out with

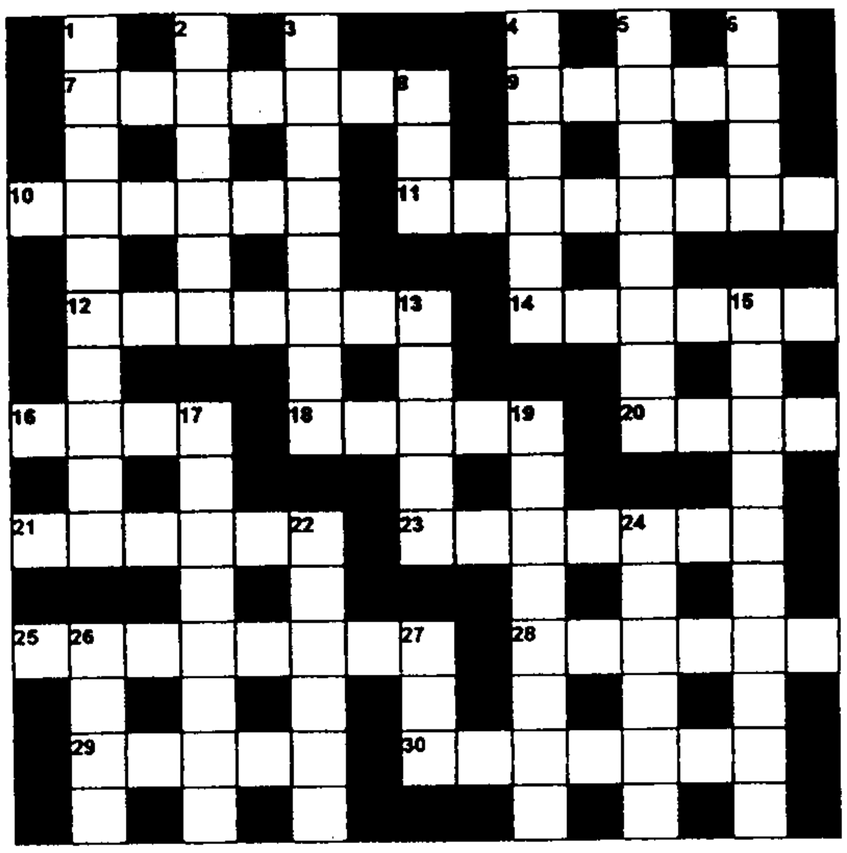
painful but economical duct tape. But first place goes to Michael Potter, for his emergency auto appendectomy kit, complete with pen light, tweezers, forceps, beer bottle, Band Aid and spoon. All held together, of course, by duct tape." (Associated Press, 2/4/96. Spotter — Brendan Joseph O'Byrne)

Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

EYE CROSSWORD 53

by Cyclops *£100 prize*



ACROSS

7 Legislation designed to prevent a revolt when party out of control with Bill against Tory leader (4,3)
9 Loony Left circle's first regulator (5)
10 It's quite acceptable being held by woman on date and getting aroused (6)
11 No loner tender, Brenda, being rather formal (3,5)
12/29 Perhaps Pamela Anderson's left-wing anti-fascist group? (7,5)
14 Main obstacle getting to Brenda's joint (6)
16 Saucy underwear Charles conceals (4)
18 Lots of money can be a pain in the arse (5)
20 Bargain vasectomy? (4)
21 The sticking out of one's organ gets no one embraced by the goddess (6)
23 The bloke on the terraces got a kick from this footballing linesman (7)
25 Persecuted type having a bitch for a boss? (8)
28 Red got screwed by Dick (6)
29 (see 12)
30 Rag man makes a good deal securing return of love doctor (7)

DOWN

1 John, abroad, gets prize for making allowances for Brenda and family (5,5)
2 A mistake getting member out of bed (4-2)
3 (see 6)
4 The sort that whoops "Super!" about sod all? (6)
5 Kelvin's grabbed by blank viewers and exposed (8)
6/3 Tardy old worker gets a dose — hardly a token of appreciation (4,8)
8 Times cramming in a load of crap (3)
13 A bit of the past brought up by some imbecile right-winger (5)
15 Breathe out when hugging Ms Hurley, Brenda (9,1)
17 Celebrity parasite supporter of capital punishment? No, oddly. (6-2)
19 Rat's nose developed by politicians (8)
22 Saudi torturers initially rattled by investigations (6)
24 Ex-public school type, antiquated lout getting erection (3,3)
26 Forte put in cooler — dished up crap (4)
27 Bulgy muscleman possesses necessary equipment to get Di panting (3)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 24.05.96. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 52

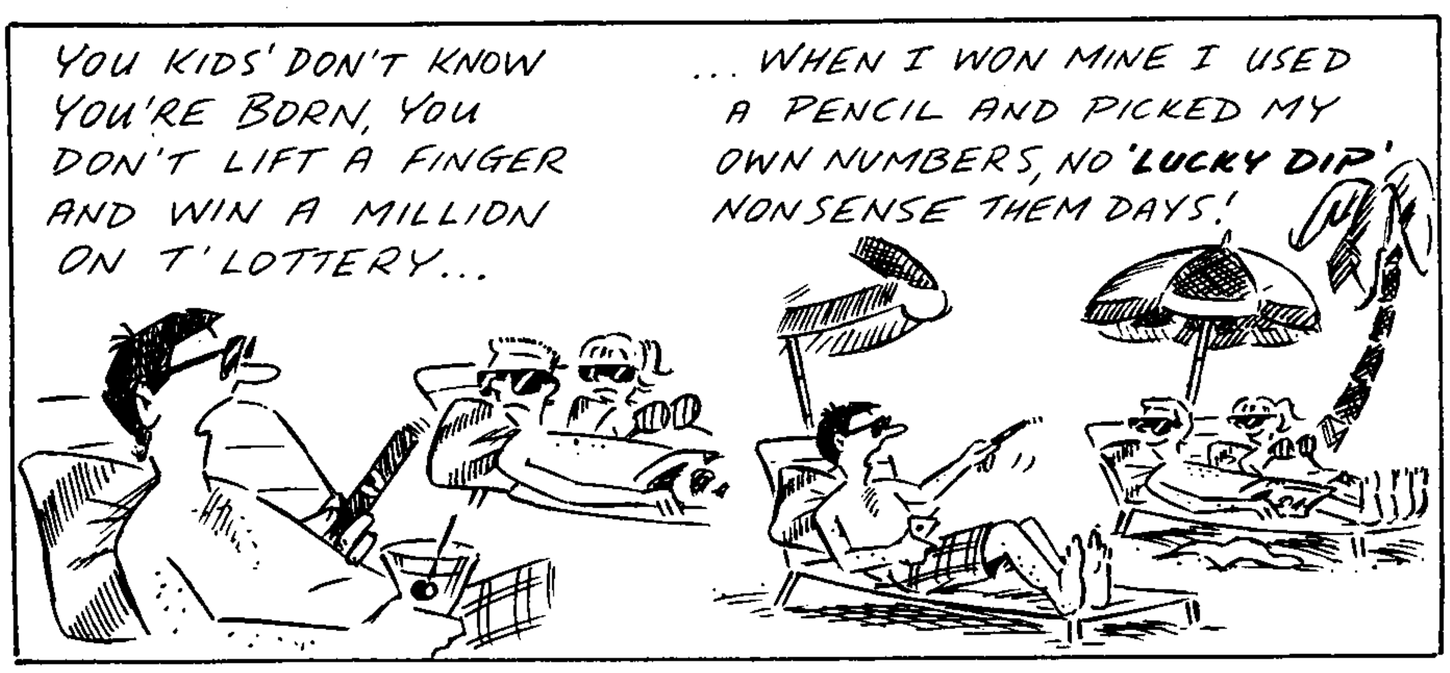
(Winner: Sean O'Neill)

ACROSS: 8/27/17 Economical with the truth 9 Imps 10 Blair 11 Merchant 12 Gaffes 14 Ancestor 15 Implant 16 Statute 20 Knockers 23 Empire 24 Assembly 25 Rules 27 (see 8) 28 Non-starter.

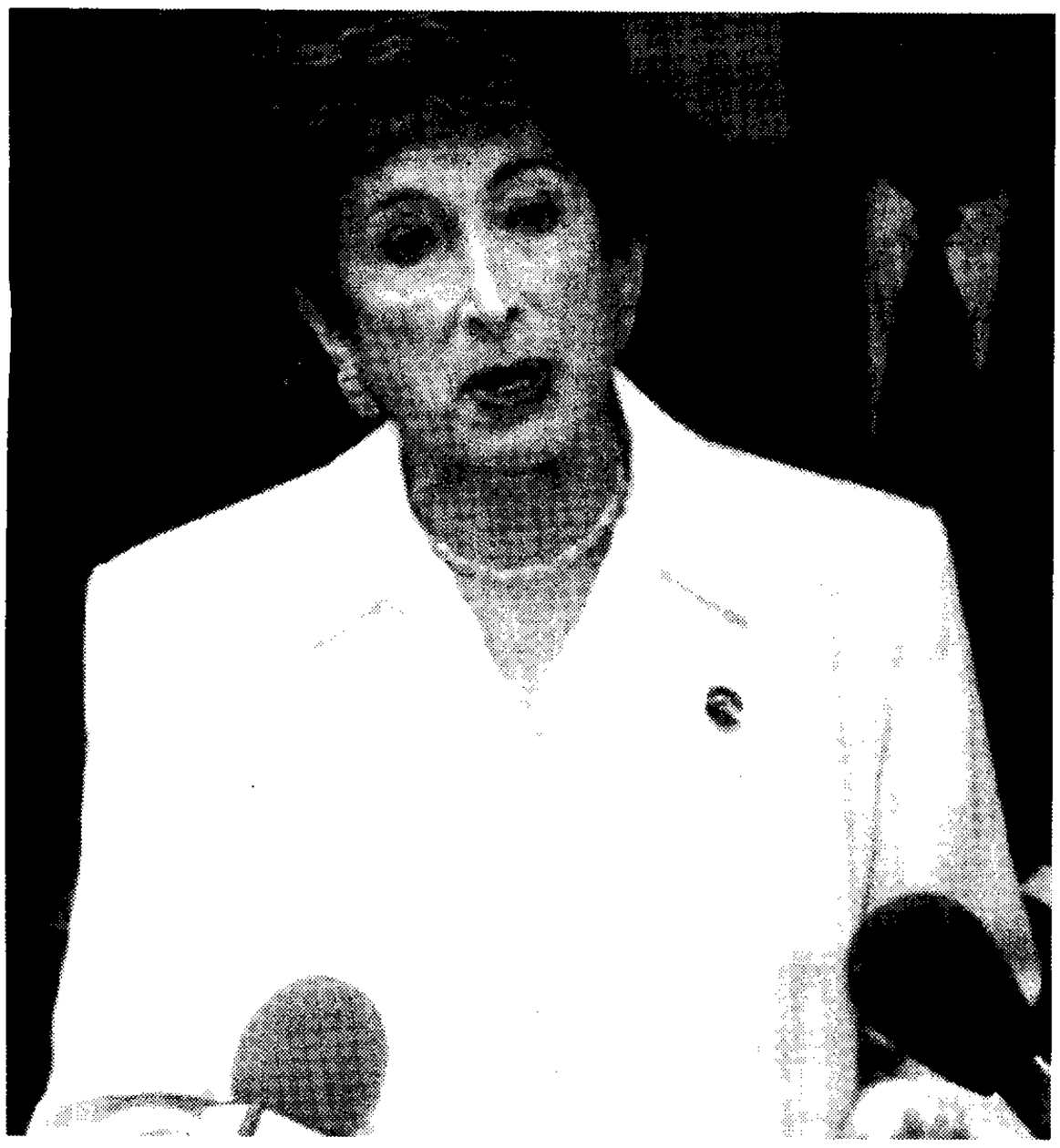
DOWN: 1 Scab 2 Unlawful 3 Imprison 4 Scumbag 5 Cleric 6 Tights 7 Spin doctor 13 Armani suit 17 (see 8) 18 Tipplers 19 Espying 21 Creche 22 Ebbing 26 Spew.

The Lottery Winners

TURNER


YOU KIDS' DON'T KNOW YOU'RE BORN, YOU DON'T LIFT A FINGER AND WIN A MILLION ON T' LOTTERY...
... WHEN I WON MINE I USED A PENCIL AND PICKED MY OWN NUMBERS, NO 'LUCKY DIP' NONSENSE THEM DAYS!

TESCO BAG FALLS APART



THE SUN SAYS

King Cantona

WHO says England is finished?

On Saturday at Wembley the lads from Manchester United showed the world that English football is the best there is.

Now we can go into Europe with our heads held high and show all the Frogs and the Euros who is the boss!

Yes — we say Hats Off to Man United's Finest!

Eric Cantona! He's Magnifique!

And Peter Schmeichel — There's nothing like a Dane!

Let's hear it! All together now! Ooh Aah! Rule Britanni-a!! *(Shome mishtake surely? Ed.)*

ON OTHER PAGES

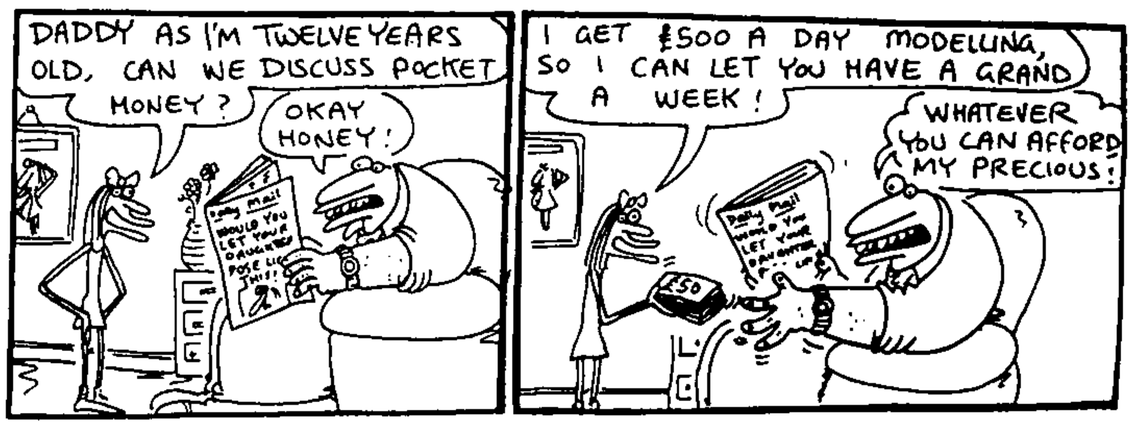
Hop off Chirac and take your smelly breath with you 7

No Kohl today, thank you!! 9

Unfunny cartoon by Jacques 27

SUPERMODELS

KERBER


DADDY AS I'M TWELVE YEARS OLD, CAN WE DISCUSS POCKET MONEY?
OKAY HONEY!
I GET £500 A DAY MODELLING, SO I CAN LET YOU HAVE A GRAND A WEEK!
WHATEVER YOU CAN AFFORD MY PRECIOUS!
£50

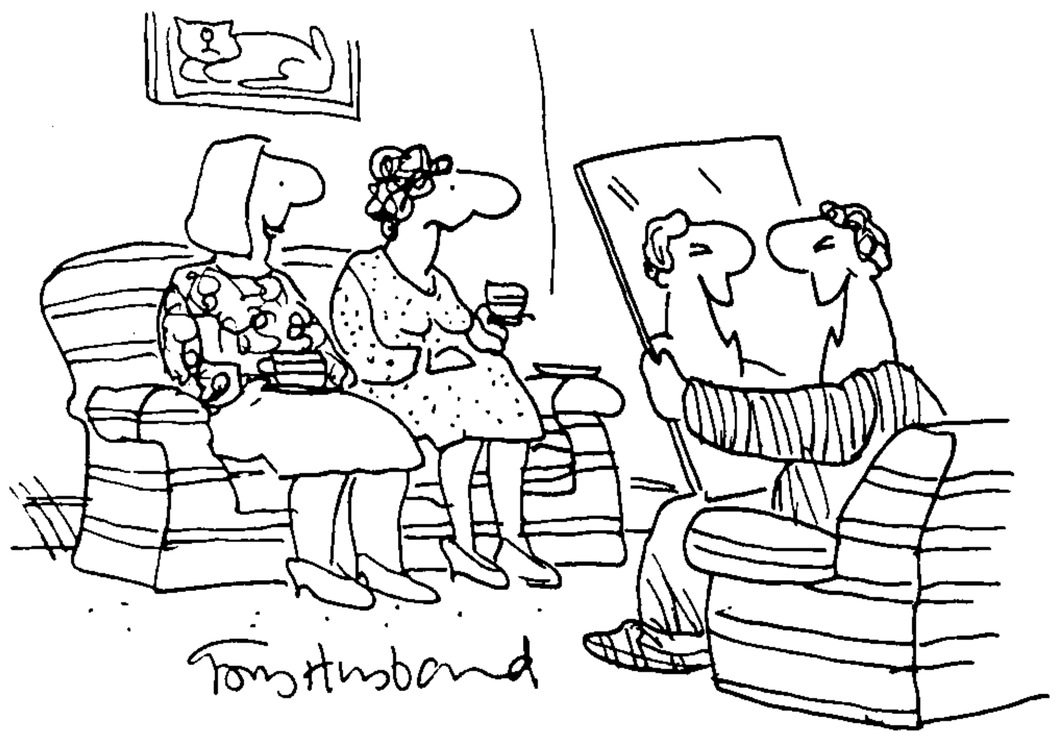
ACADEMIC NEWS

University of Oxford

Mr O.J. Simpson will deliver the Dr Crippen Memorial Lecture at the Sheldonian Theatre. The title will be "Wealth and Celebrity and their effect on the American Criminal Justice System". He will then be awarded a First degree by the holder of the new chair (electric) in Criminal Psychology, Lord Archole of Brownose *(shurely 'Brazenliar'? Ed).*

Ms Joanna Lumley will institute a new chair, the Ab Fab Regius Professorship of Situational Comedy and Allied Television Commercials. Her address to the university convocation is now available on BBC Video, price £9.99. It will be repeated this summer and every year subsequently.

Mr Darius Guppy has bequeathed a new chair for the study of insurance fraud at Magdalen College, Oxford. *(That's enough Academic News. Ed.)*



"Charles has the wonderful ability to laugh at himself"

QUEEN'S HANDS — HAVE THEY GOT CELLULITE?

by Our Medical Correspondent **Hans Eysink-zey-haf**

MEDICAL experts are furiously debating the possibility that the hands of Her Majesty the Queen are suffering from cellulite.

In spite of the fact that the Queen exercises her hands regularly by waving, shaking hands, cutting ribbons and planting trees, evidence in a recent portrait suggests that the royal digits have succumbed to the curse of twentieth century womanhood.

"Pudgy, flabby, wrinkly." These are just some of the words being used to describe the most powerful fingers in the world.

The Queen's defenders say that the portrait is unfair and that the artist has mistakenly modelled her hands on Princess Diana's thighs.

THOSE MPs' EARNINGS IN FULL (contd from p. 94)

Sir Bufton Tufton (Lymeswold, Con): Consultant to the Liquid Gas Appliances Association (£10,0000; parliamentary adviser to the Thermos Flask Co., Solihull (£5,000); The Artificial Limb Manufacturers Assn (£10,000); The Paperclip Wholesalers Federation (2,000,000 paperclips); the Raspberry, Nectarine and Mango Growers Guild (£20,000); the Wiggin Souvenir Tea-Towel Co., Tipperary (£15,000); occasional contribs to trade papers, e.g. Tea-Towels and Tea-Towelmen, Thermos World, The Liquid Gazette Monthly and 'Out On A Limb', the house magazine of the Artificial Limb Manufacturers Assn. Expenses-paid trips to Antigua (as guest of Anglo-Antiguan Nectarine Growers Alliance); Reykjavik (as guest of Icelandic tea-towel industry); guest speaker at Auckland International Bath Tap '95 Conference; visit to Cairo as guest of Mr Mohamed al-Fayed. Gifts received: silver commemorative thermos (value £5); brass model of artificial leg mounted on teak (value £7); assorted tea-towels carrying various legends, e.g. ICELANDERS DO IT IN THE GEYSER, 20 WAYS TO COOK A PUFFIN and I ❤ PUNCH; and one Gold-Style Bath Tap inscribed YOU TURN ME ON.

Dave Tuff (Hockney, Lab): 1 pr socks, a present from the Amalgamated Weavers and Holedrawers Assn (value 3p). 2 Tickets to second night of *Malcolm Muggeridge — The Musical* from Mr Owen Oyston. *(That's enough earnings — Ed.)*

THOSE MPs' EARNINGS NOT IN FULL

by Our Political Staff **Lady Olga Moron**

UNDER new rules that MPs should disclose their extra-parliamentary earnings, a large number of Conservative MPs have decided not to declare anything at all.

"We have nothing to hide," said one, who refused to give his name, "which is why we have decided to hide it."

Topping the list of those who have nothing to hide is Sir Edward Heath, former Prime Minister, who said: "It is no business of anybody's that I earn millions of pounds a year for being so important and famous."

Speaking from his £5 million house in Salisbury Close last night, Sir Edward said: "My earnings are entirely unrelated to the fact that I am an MP and a former prime minister.

"My services are a consultant to the likes of the Anglo-Chinese Tobacco and Toxic Waste Corporation are solely in recognition of my talents as one of the world's greatest conductors.

"Furthermore I am retained by Cockup Computer Consulting only in my capacity as a world-class yachtsman. I would remind you that I was once the winner of the Fastnet Race, which is more than Mrs Thatcher ever was."

Another non-declarer was Mr David Melody FM, the much-hated disc-jockey and football commentator who was last seen in his constituency in 1993.

"The fact that I earn £1.7 million a year is nothing to do with the British public," he said, "since it is all paid into bank accounts in the United Arab Sultanates by my friends in Gulf Deathco."

LATE NEWS

A number of leading businessmen yesterday refused to disclose to the public whether or not they were Conservative MPs as well. Said one industrialist: "My part-time job as a Member of Parliament has nothing to do with my work as a board director and consultant. It is little more than a poorly paid hobby and takes none of my energy away from my real commitment to creating wealth. For myself." He concluded: "I have no interest in Parliament so I am not declaring the fact that I am an MP."

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam: Lines To Commemorate The 50th Anniversary Of The Invention Of The Bikini Bathing Device.

So. Bikini.
You are
50.

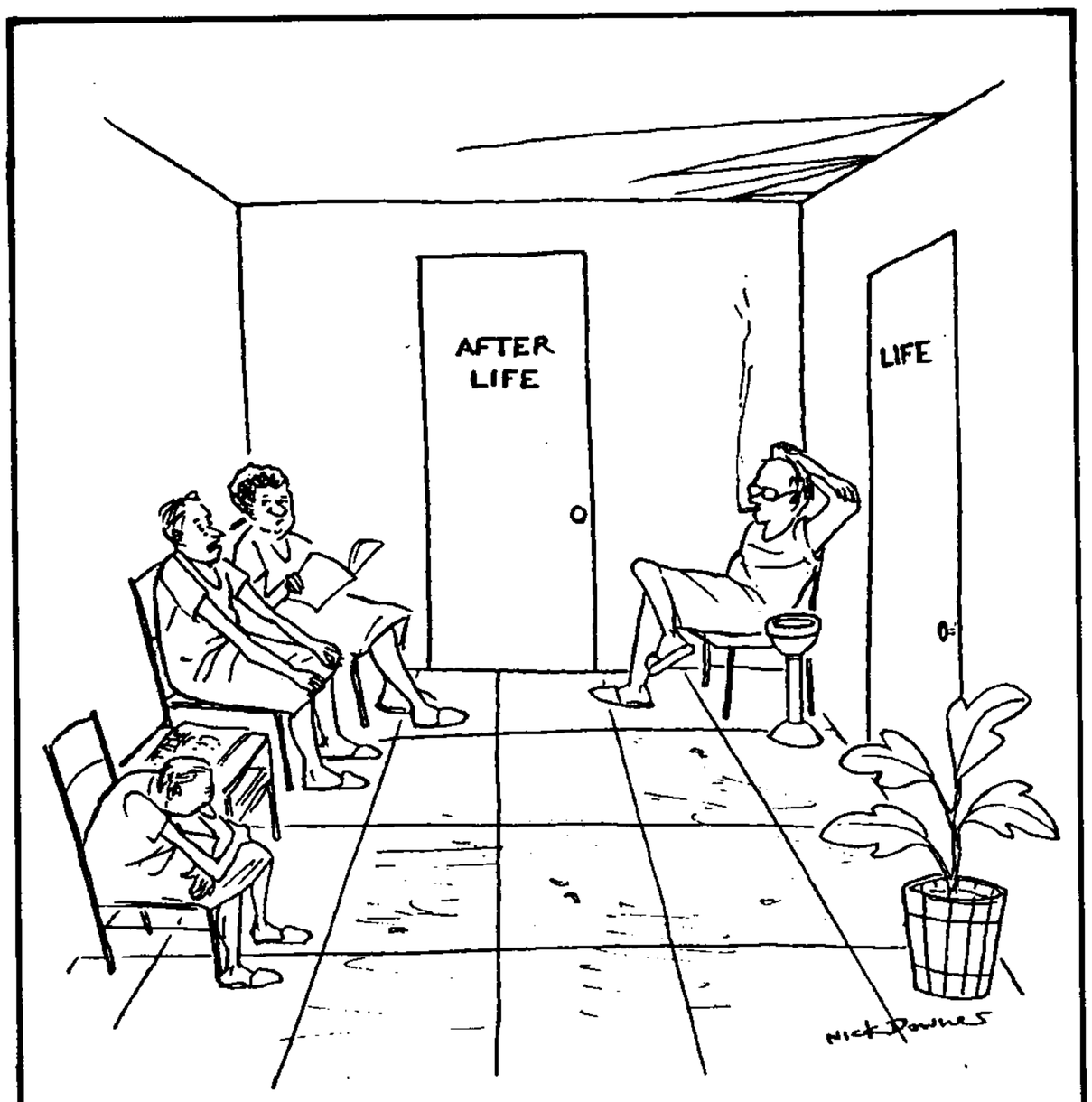
Which is a
Very good excuse
To print lots of pictures
Of ladies
With no clothes on.

Apart from
Bikinis
Of course.

E.J. Thribb (36-17½-36)

More than three million passengers have used the airport rail link in as many years and a new direct service from Crewe is due to start in June.

Railnews



"Funny, I thought a near-death experience would be different, somehow."

SOUTH AFRICAN CRISIS

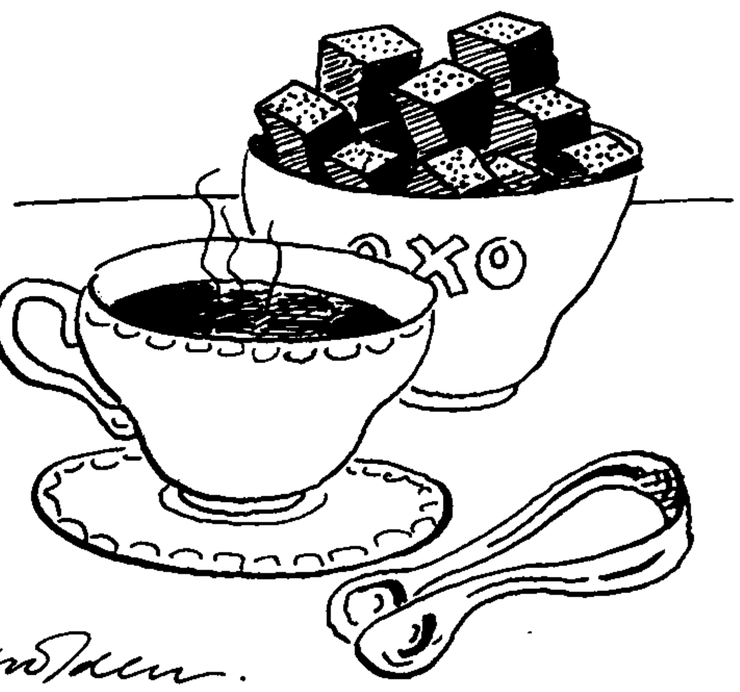
PLUS Two nights for the price of three at 35 of Scotland's top hotels TOKEN PAGE 22

Scottish Daily Mail

The Secret DAIRY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47 3/4

Monday

Today was a historic day, when Mr Herr Kohl, the German Chancellor, flew to Britain to discuss peace terms in the great beef war. As Mr Morris Norris explained to me: "It is just like Munich, only the other way round." He even suggested a very good joke for me to tell the journalists when we came out to have our photographs taken. "Why don't you say, prime minister," he suggested, " 'It is beef in our time'?" To



show Herr Kohl just what we think of Europe, I specially asked the cook (not the one I didn't have an affair with, oh no) to serve the following menu:

British Beef Soup

Side of Best British Beef

Jelly, made from British gelatin

Cream from British BSE-accredited herds

Beef Tea

or

Fish

Unfortunately, Herr Kohl chose the fish, which rather spoiled Mr Norris's joke about the beef, as "Fish in our time" is not nearly as amusing, especially since we had to buy it from the Spanish fish shop El Pesces di Knightsbridge.

Tuesday

Today I made a historic speech about all the loonies, bastards, rebels and other barmies two apples short of a picnic, ie Mr Sir James Goldsmith, who do not understand my clear vision of Europe. Mr Norris came up with a brilliant new phrase which really describes Mr Goldsmith and his new friend Mr Redwood perfectly, ie they are all cuckoo. There is indeed no other word to describe these cuckoos. They are completely cuckoo, living on Cloud Nine, which is the place where cuckoos live, when they are not in their nests of course. When I told my wife Norman about my brilliant "cuckoo" idea, she asked: "Is that the cuckoo you didn't have the affair with?", missing the point as usual.

Wednesday

As usual, the newspapers have got it wrong. They say I have done a secret deal with Mr Heseltine, so that if I do badly in the local elections he will take over the government. While I was reading this, Mr Heseltine called me into his office and I did not even have to wait for the green light. "What's this about me taking over after the local elections?" he said. "Don't they realise I took over months ago. Now get out and get on with your work!" He is certainly a very decisive man, just what this country needs.

Thursday

Today I have won a great victory in the local elections. All the anti-Conservative press, like the Daily Mail and the Telegraph, said that we would not win a single seat. How totally wrong can you get. We did win a single seat, in Basildon, which has long been known as one of the safest Labour strongholds in the country. Of course, it was predictable that the Liberals would do well in their traditional heartlands like Tunbridge Wells, but in general it was a night of Tory triumph. When I congratulated Dr Mawhinney he was so moved that tears began to roll down his cheeks and he jumped out of the window in joy, like my ex-friend Mr Lamont used to do in the days when Britain was doing so well in the ERM.

Friday

Labour are in no small measure on the run after their trouncing at the polls. Dr Mawhinney has discovered three schools in Labour-held parts of London where none of the children can read. "This is a devastating indictment," he said, "of the total failure of Labour's education policy during the last 17 years." No wonder Mr Blair is sending his children to Eton.

Saturday

Today is Europe Day, which is traditionally when we are meant to celebrate the EU. I have decided to use this to send a very clear signal to Brussels of where we now stand on Europe. Instructions have been issued to all departments as follows:

1. EU flags are to be purchased by all departments. This is to show Britain's determination to be at the heart of Europe.

2. These flags are on no account to be flown or waved in any circumstances. This is to show where Britain stands on the beef issue.

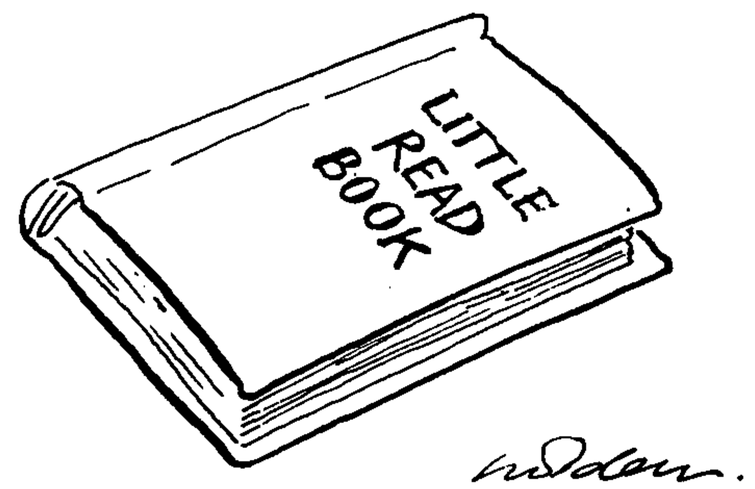
Sunday

At last Labour are finished! The newspapers are full of the row between Mr Brown and Mr Mandelson.

I called Dr Mawhinney to tell him the good news.

"The Party is fragmented! They're at each other's throats! They can't agree on a single policy."

"Typical," said Dr Mawhinney. "They're stealing all our ideas again. No wonder they are so far ahead in the polls."

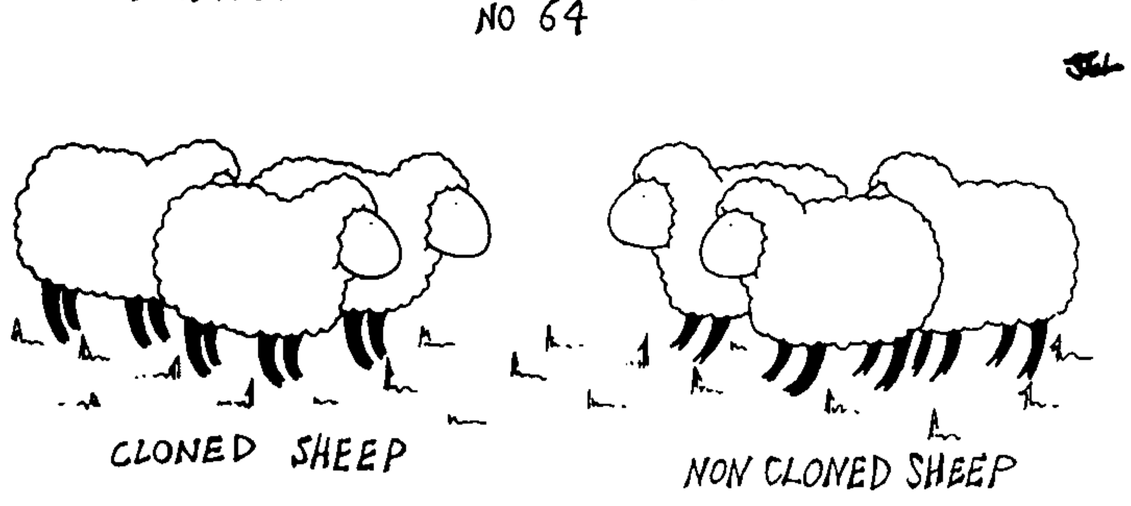


Monday

My friend Mr Clark has given an interview to the Observer newspaper. He has had a brilliant idea not to cut taxes. "This will win the next election," I told Dr Mawhinney. "Yes it will," he replied. "For Labour." He is getting very confused nowadays, due to working too hard.

When I spoke to Mr Clark he made it very clear. "Of course, Prime Minister," he said, "this will be an unpopular measure in the short term. But in the long term it will be of huge benefit to the Party when they are returned to power with a new Prime Minister, one who is a man of principle, one who refuses to cut taxes just to be popular, one who wears suede shoes, likes jazz and smokes Panatellas."

Poor Mr Clark! He does not realise that I have black shoes, like Buddy Holly and do not smoke at all. He must be working too hard as well.

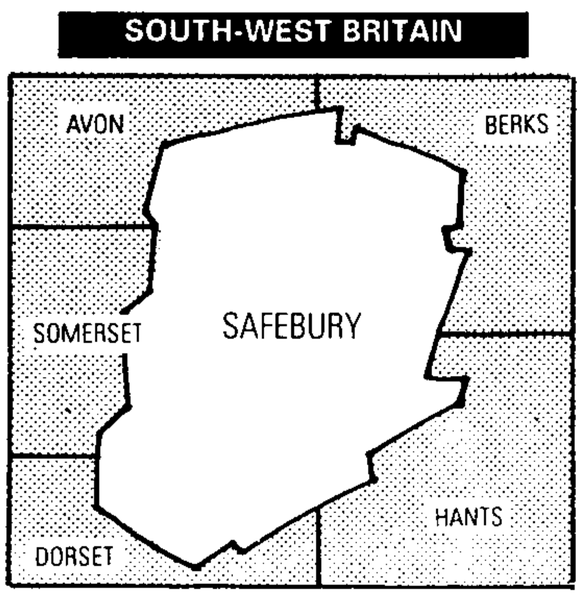


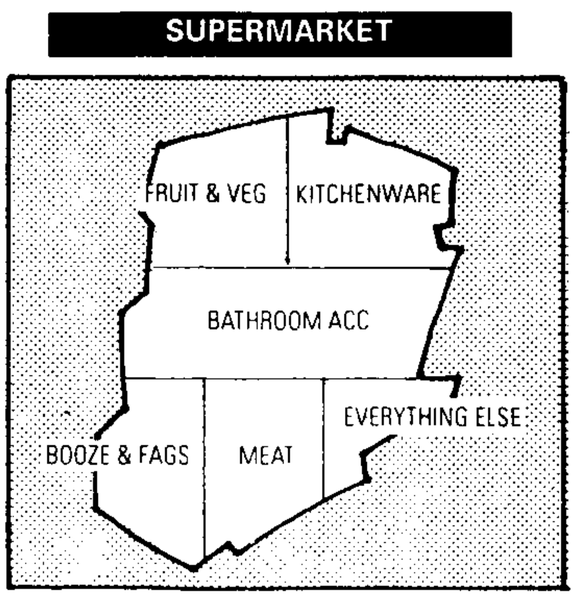
SUPERMARKET PICKS UP BARGAIN SHOCK

by Our Environment Correspondent **Emily Greenfield**

THE people of Wiltshire were left reeling yesterday at the news that their county has been sold to supermarket chain Safeburys, in a deal which involves the complete evacuation of the population and permission to begin construction work over the entire county. This will provide Safeburys with their largest outlet in Britain to date.

Senior county council leader Humphrey Safebury spoke exclusively to us this morning from his home in neighbouring Berkshire, confirming the deal. He said: "The entire county of Wiltshire will be roofed over, and then divided into various numbered departments with drive-through aisles for customers to pick up their goods."





RADIO HIGHLIGHTS

The Today Programme R4

John Humpty Dumpty: ... and later on in the programme we hope to be talking to the Liberal Democrat spokesman on pensions, Dame Tessa Peplan on the government's proposals for compulsory euthanasia in old people's homes, but now with the time just coming up to eight minutes to eight it's Thought for the Day and the speaker in our Neasden studio is The Right Reverend Flannel, the Suffragan Bishop of Neasden. Good morning Ron.

Flannel: Good morning Jim. You know, life is a funny business with its ups and downs. Only this morning I was reading a letter I'd received from the BBC with its rather sad message: "Dear Bishop. You're fired." It's easy to get depressed by this sort of thing but it's important not to let it get you down. I always remember the words of one of my favourite songs — "Whenever I feel afraid I whistle a happy tune." And, do you know, I do... *(Begins to whistle)* So, next time you get a letter with some bad news, just remember — have a little whistle. You'll find it makes all the difference.

Humpty Dumpty: Goodbye Bishop. And now a worrying new report which links the consumption of paperclips with getting a tummy ache. In our Inverness studio is Professor Richard Loony, author of the book *Don't Eat Anything If You Want to Stay Alive. (Contd 94KHz)*

You decide who will present the new-look-broad-based-non-churchy Thought For The Day

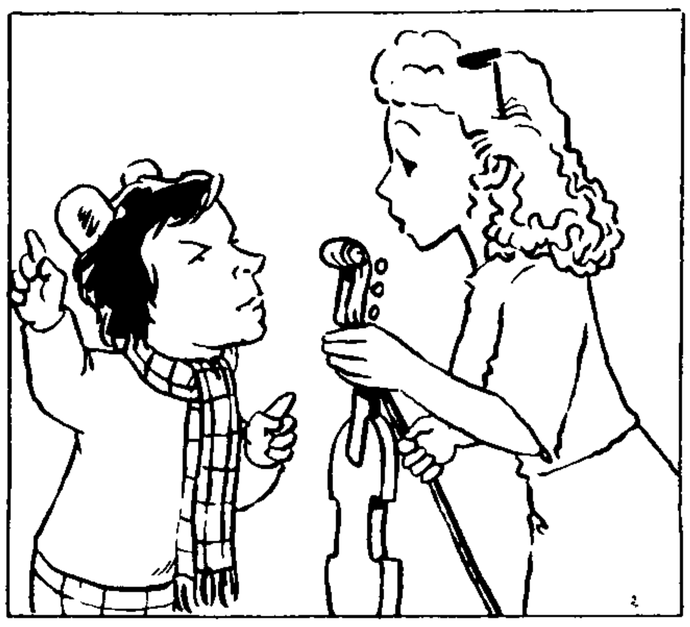
1. Sir James Goldsmith
2. Tariq Ali
3. Chris Eubank
4. Paula Yates
5. Andrew Neil
6. Zenab Badawi
7. The late Kalim Siddiqui
8. Andrew Lloyd-Webber
9. Reg Nogs, the Chief Satanist
10. Arsenal's Ian Wright

Phone now with YOUR choice for the nation's top religious slot:
0898-9898-8998 (538p per minute off peak, 3p on peak)

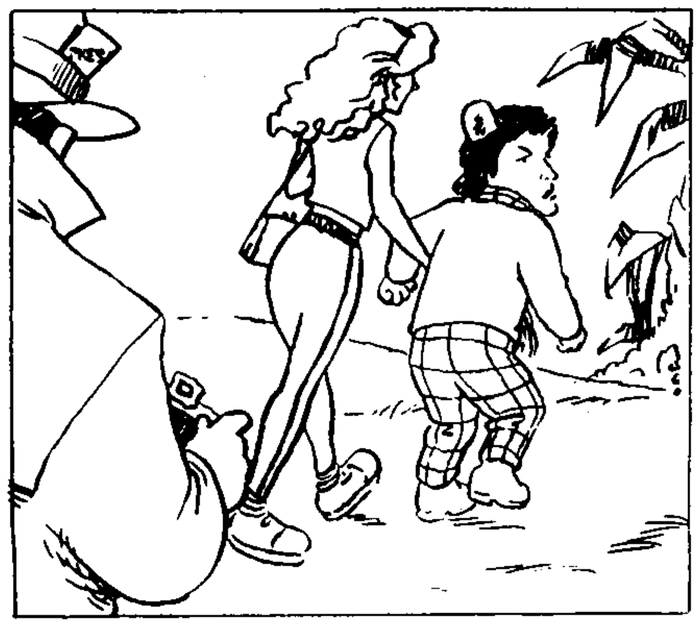
The Adventures of RUPERT the Allason

Part 94: Rupert Goes to St Tropez

Poor Rupert! He has lost his case,
To the Daily Mirror! What a disgrace!
Now he must pay the lawyers' bill.
No wonder poor Rupert looks so ill!



But never mind, comfort is at hand —
Lovely Jane, who plays violin in a band!
Off Rupert takes her to the South of France
To eat and drink and get his leg over
(shurely 'dance'? Ed).



But unbeknownst to Rupert Bare
The hacks of the Daily Mirror are lurking there.
Rupert is caught with his trousers down.
No wonder now he wears a frown!

© The Daily Mirror

Storm Grows Over Shock Royal Portrait

by Brian R. Sewell

THE world of art was rocked to its foundations yesterday by a new portrait of the Queen.

The picture, by Belgian painter Quinten Massys, has been hailed by critics as "a masterpiece of intense realism" and has been defended by the artist as "an affectionate tribute to Her Majesty".

Some commentators, however, are not so sure *(continues for 94 pages)*

Restored Holbein Goes On Show

by Brian R. Sewell (again)

Better than new: Holbein's masterpiece after cleaning

The world of art was overjoyed yesterday when one of the world's most famous paintings, The Ambassadors by Hans Holbein, emerged from a £2 million, seven-year restoration programme.

Said one art lover: "We have never seen The Ambassadors looking like this before — I had no idea Marilyn Monroe was in the 16th century diplomatic service."

Said the National Gallery's restoration supremo Sir Nicholas Blowlamp: "It was the biggest job we've ever taken on. As we sandpapered away centuries of grime and paint we were astonished to lay bare a blank canvas — exactly as it was when Holbein first saw it.

"After years of painstaking scholarship, we were able to reconstruct the picture exactly as the artist would have wanted it, had he been here today."

IN THE SALEROOM

GNOMEBY'S

A Collection of Highly Important Cricket Memorabilia — the property of the late Mr Brian "Johnners" Johnston ("Old Johnners") O.C.

1 MCC Tie, worn and slightly stained with soup *(poss. Brown Windsor)*

1 Portion Chocolate Sponge Cake, still in original tin with autographed covering note from Mrs Ethel Winstridge of Chepstow

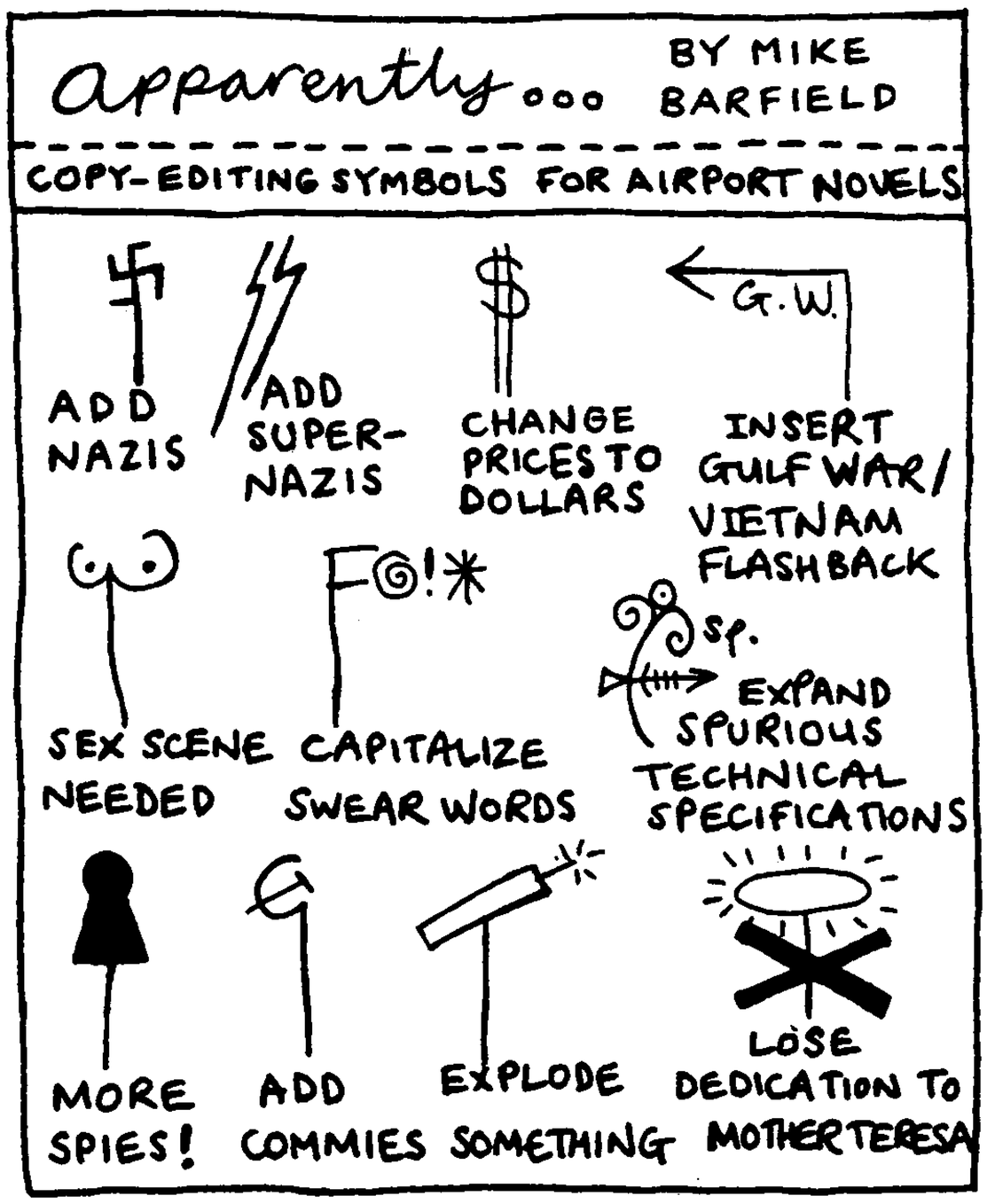
Another Piece Of Cake, possibly Dundee, slightly nibbled, still in original clingfilm *(covering note lost)*

1 Decorated Commemorative Cake Tin, bearing portrait of Her Majesty the Queen on her Silver Jubilee. No cake remaining

Highly important autographed note signed by Trevor Bailey, carrying inscription "Wake up, Johnners, you're on at the end of the over"

Miniature hand-crafted cricket bat signed in ink by members of 1975 New Zealand touring team (omitting J.P.Q. O'Halloran, P. Rotormowa and Sir R. Hadlee)

(That's enough Johnnersiana. Ed)



"The site is due to be developed and there are questions which obviously arise when an area which has been a burial ground is to be developed, and a number of bodies start to take an interest," he said.

Surrey Comet

From The Referendum Bunker

Bulletin-Directive No. 94

Achtung!

Come in, Mr Major. I was expecting you.

So, you have lost the local elections, as I predicted. Hundreds of your people wiped out in an afternoon. So very sad for you, Mr Bond. Heh, heh, heh. *(Strokes white killer snake with ringed finger)*

And now you come crawling to me, the great Sir Jams Goldfinger, Supreme Führer of the Euro-Fishpaste Party.

007. Ironic, no? Since that is how many seats you will have left when I have launched my final assault at the coming election. Heh, heh.

You have been exceedingly foolish, Mr Major. You said I was living in cloud-cuckoo land.

This makes me very, very angry, Mr Major *(swallows snake)* — and when I am angry I am at my most dangerous.

It is you, Mr Major, who is living in this land of cuckoos.

The cuckoo is the bird which pushes lesser birds out of the nest, nicht wahr?

Think about it, Mr Bond. The clock is already ticking away. You have only eleven months left, or even less.

One more of your followers having a mysterious sudden death on the back benchers and your little game is over.

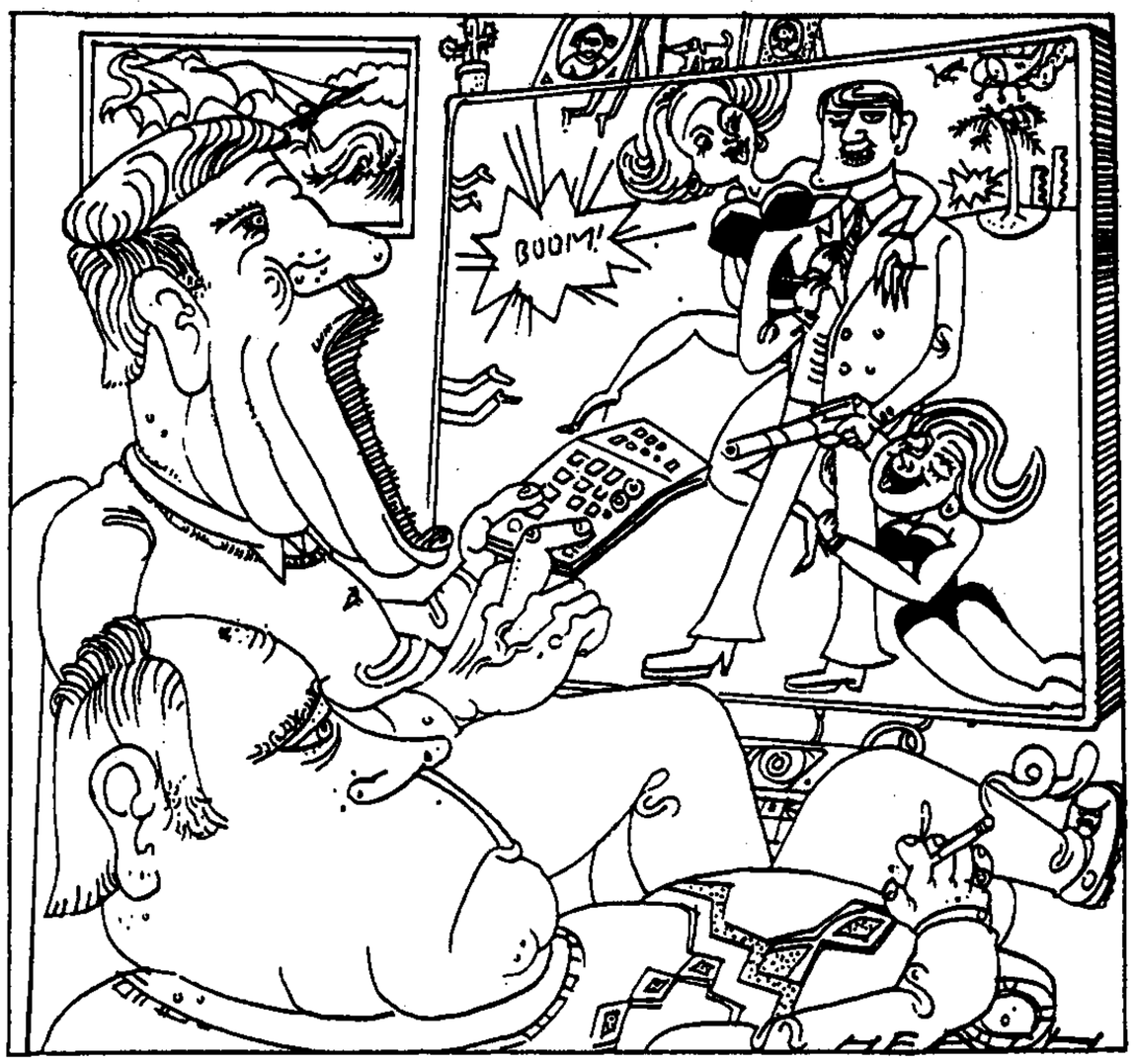
Carla! *(He summons glamorous woman dressed in black leather catsuit)* Take Mr Bond away and see if you can convert him to our way of thinking.

Use some of your persuasive charms. If not, we will have to resort to other means.

(Opens trapdoor to reveal hundreds of highly trained Old Etonian Referendum Party candidates, singing "Jolly Voting Whether Or Not To Leave The Eu")

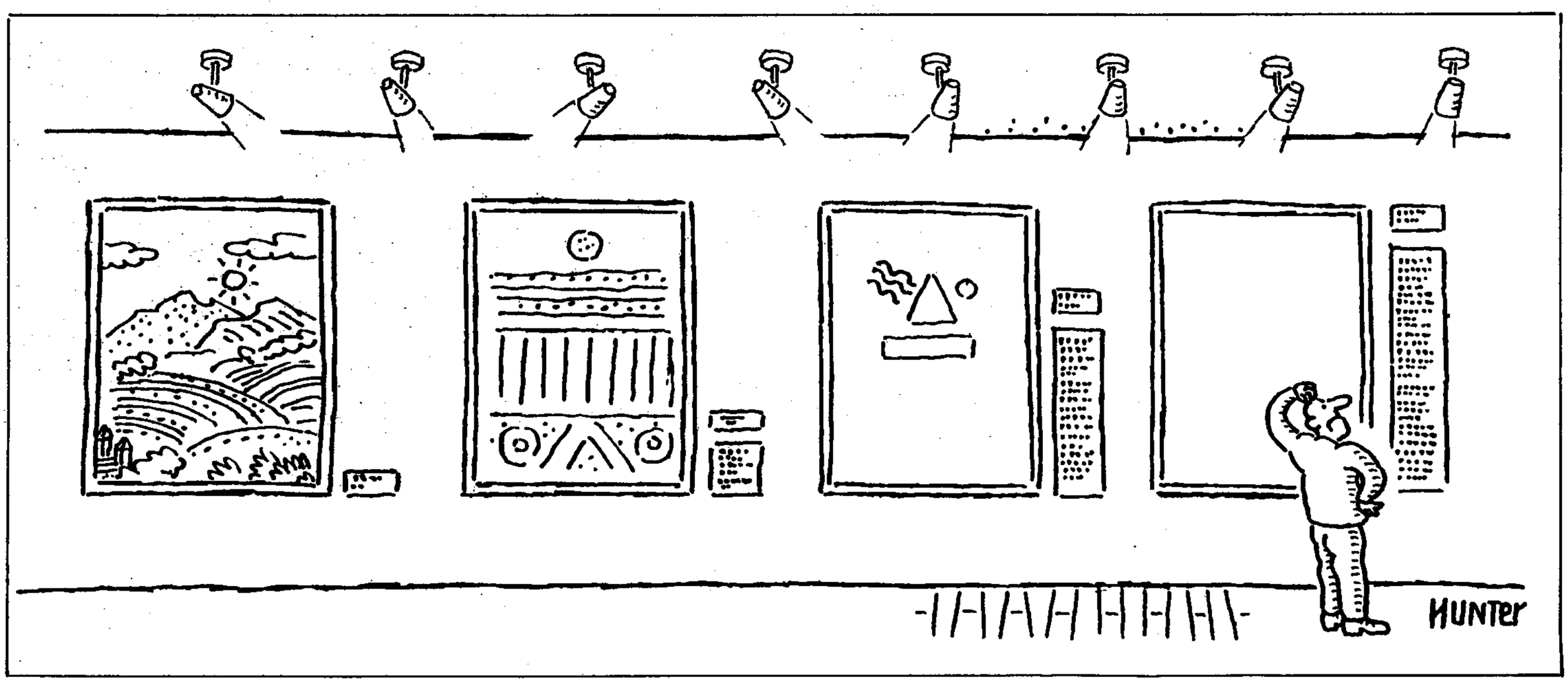
Issued by the Referendum Party of Great Britain
(prop. Sir Jimmy Blopaste)

Remember — EU Only Live Twice



Great Bores Of Today.

"...for my money Connery was the only one who was any good Moore was just laughable and Dalton was hopeless the new man started off well but it's not the same do you remember when Connery skied off the mountain with the jet pack? which one was that in? *Thunderball*? no that was the one with the brilliant underwater car chase in Venice wasn't it? when did he get married? was that the one with Donald Pleasence as Blofeld? he was great much better than Charles Gray and Oddjob was amazing wasn't he? when he threw his hat and it caught in the electric wires and everything blew up... that was *Moonraker* I think or was it *Octopussy*? and who had the pen that turned into a spaceship? I loved Q — you know the bloke with the gadgets — he's still in it *Live And Let Die* was a good one in the West Indies but I preferred the one in the Greek monastery which had Topol in it... now *Where Eagles Dare*... that was a good one... still my favourite of all time has to be *Dr No* what happened in that one?"



WORLD SNOOZER FINAL LASTS RECORD 94 HOURS

by **Ted Lowe-Voice**, Our Man At The Sheffield Crucible With A Sleeping Bag And A Thermos Flask

THE WORLD of snoozer was rocked slowly to sleep over the Bank Holiday weekend as six-time champion Stephen Dreary stroked his way into the record books.

His marathon stint at the green baize, during which he defeated newcomer Peter Waistcoat, has finally established him as the most boring player of all time.

The statistics tell their own story:

- **In 1969 1 million people fell asleep watching BBC2's coverage of the final of the world's dullest sport.**
- **In 1996 an incredible 12 million people left the set on as they slumbered happily in their armchairs in front of the extended coverage of Embassy's Blue Chip Dullathon.**
- **In 1969 the then-champion, Ray Boredom, chalked his cue a mere 28 times.**
- **In 1996 Stephen Dreary used no less than three tons of the blue cubes.**
- **In 1969 the referee was back home in East Dagenham by half-past ten and was able to take his dog, Blackie, for a walk before bed.**
- **In 1996 the referee was placed on a life-support system and drip-fed adrenalin in order to keep him awake through the 94-day epic.**

A BBC sports spokesman said: "Snoozer has yet again proved itself the nation's number one sleep-inducing sport. There is nothing to rival it for sheer tedium and in Stephen Dreary the game has found a worthy champion. Even talking about Dreary makes me feel... excuse me, do you mind if I lie down? Z-z-z-z..."

NEW!

BR announces the New Awaygay Time-table (Partners Free)

Sackville West	10.05
Winterson	10.35
Dyke *(Fridays only)*	11.08
Burchill	12.22
Hambling	12.49
Radclyffe Hall	13.03

ADVERTISEMENT

BBC PROMS 96

The BBC Is Proud To Announce The Return Of Britain's Best-loved Musical Institution

The **JOANNA LUMLEY** Promenade Concerts at London's Premier Rendezvous — the Albert Hall

Your chance to rub shoulders with such musical aficionados as:

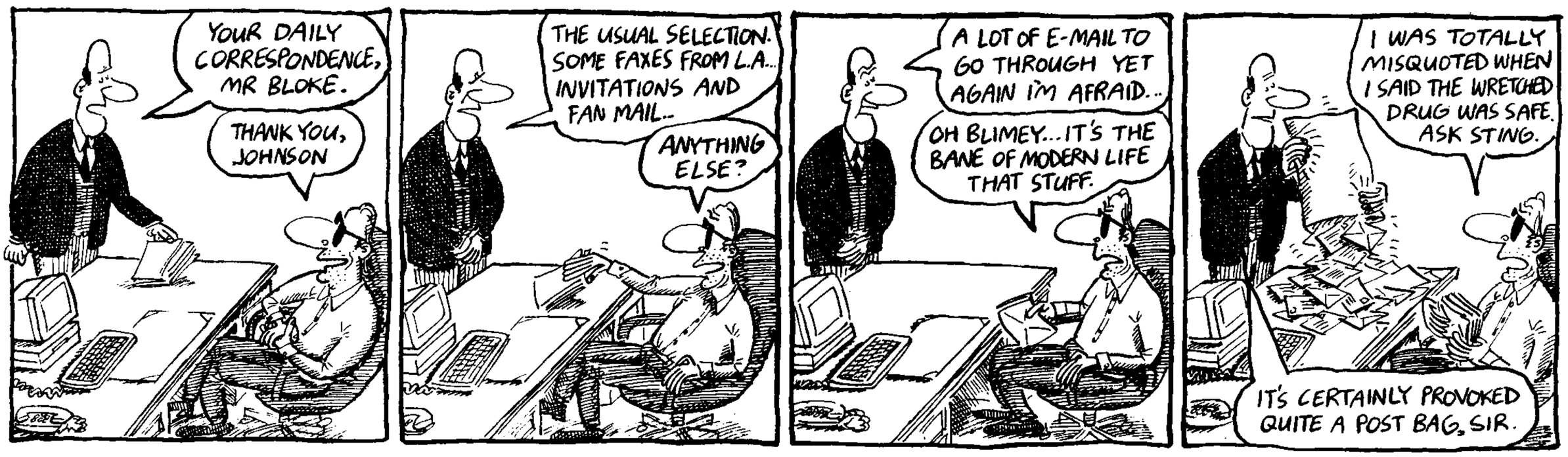
- **DAVID GOWER** *("The Proms really hit me for six — geddit?")*
- **IAN HISLOP** *("Have they got tunes for you — geddit?")*
- **JOANNA LUMLEY** *("The Proms really are Absolutely Fabulous — geddit? And it's so near Harvey Nicks where you can get your legs waxed.")*
- **ERIC CANTONA** *("Ooh, aah, Canteloupe — geddit?")*
- Soho's **JEFF BERNARD** *("Bloody Mahler — what a bastard!")*

BBC Proms — meet your friends, have a drink, slip round the corner for a meal, take a walk in the park and you can drive home to the sound of the world's most beautiful music on Classic FM.

(The editor would like to make it clear that he does not necessarily agree with the views expressed in this attack on himself by his loyal colleagues.)

Celeb

LIGGER


YOUR DAILY CORRESPONDENCE, MR BLOKE.
THANK YOU, JOHNSON
THE USUAL SELECTION. SOME FAXES FROM L.A... INVITATIONS AND FAN MAIL...
ANYTHING ELSE?
A LOT OF E-MAIL TO GO THROUGH YET AGAIN I'M AFRAID...
OH BLIMEY... IT'S THE BANE OF MODERN LIFE THAT STUFF.
I WAS TOTALLY MISQUOTED WHEN I SAID THE WRETCHED DRUG WAS SAFE. ASK STING.
IT'S CERTAINLY PROVOKED QUITE A POST BAG, SIR.

DIARY

ALBANY

BY KENNETH ROSE

The Sunday Telegraph

Excellent news for the better-bred people of Paris. Within weeks Parisians will be rejoicing that the redoubtable Duchess of Brentford is among them. Assuming all goes according to plan, Lavinia Brentford will be travelling to the capital city of France in a fortnight's time. Ever the indomitable traveller, Her Grace has chosen to get there by the new-fangled "Channel Tunnel".

The news that such an aristocrat will be travelling with them is indeed a major coup for Eurotunnel, who own this highly successful enterprise. Yet it says much for Lavinia's willingness to "muck in" that she will be joining a pre-scheduled trip, perhaps even rubbing shoulders with ordinary "tourists", rather than demanding her very own train, or, indeed, tunnel.

She is a lady of many parts. I well recall how, back in 1977, Lavvy succeeded in pressing a wild-flower in a press designed for that very purpose, purchased for her from the excellent Peter Jones department store by her niece, the Hon. Jollity de Clerkenwell. The story goes that the Queen Mother was passing through the county at just the same time as Lavinia was pressing her wild flower. But Her Majesty was heading North for Glamis, so didn't stop. It seems curious that these two estimable ladies have never met.

Lord Sordid of Nuneaton is one of the many heroes to emerge from *Reasonably Amusing: A Collection of Slightly Dull Anecdotes Concerning the Blue-Blooded* (19pp), privately printed by the Earl of Flotsam in aid of that good-hearted charity, the Flotsam Castle Swimming Pool (Heating) Fund.

The story goes that when Geoffrey Sordid — family motto "Omnia Ars Lickum" — was being decorated with the Royal Order of the Spanner by the Queen Mother, he pointed out, with his incorrigible good humour, that the weather was a little overcast. Quick as a flash, the Queen Mother replied: "Actually, I haven't been out yet — but I'll take your word for it!"

I doubt whether one of today's computer operatives or public relations men could have enjoyed such a prolonged conversation with a senior member of our Royal Family. What chance would they stand against a drop of blue blood? This puts paid to the present Labour Party's endless calls for more "democracy"!

That genial patrician, the Duke of Oswestry, a wise and kindly man, has generously rewarded his long-standing retainer, Mr William "Bill" Grump with a very special present. I understand that "Bill", still going strong at 83, is to be allowed a day off — his first in over fifty years. Over an estimable luncheon at Claridge's last week, His Grace informed me that "Bill" well deserves his long-awaited break: "Give Bill a pair of kitchen scissors and he'll set about our lawns like nobody's business," he told me, an appreciative tear in his eye.

The special day is provisionally scheduled for early 1999. The admirable "Bill" has still not made up his mind how he will occupy himself on his "day off". But hard work is always an option. My guess is that he will catch up on some shoe-polishing for his beloved employer; Bill is one of the last in the country to use the tried-and-tested method of tongue-and-lips.

Contrary to what many low-born socialist foreigners — many of them a little less than white! — would have us believe, our Royal Family has never been held in greater affection by its people. And rightly so. The marriage of Their Royal Highnesses the Princess and Princess of Wales has never looked so strong, whilst the Duchess of York continues to exercise the dignity and composure that have proved her hallmarks. Those mischief-makers who would seek to criticise her for having her toes sucked by an American businessman should be reminded that Sarah instinctively remembered to offer him first the big toe on her right foot, followed by the middle toe on her left foot, which is of course the correct procedure for a Duchess.

Sadly, a recent "film" starring a thespian, Sir Ian McKellen, does a grave injustice to the memory of one of the Prince of Wales's most noble ancestors, namely King Richard III. By all accounts, the King was a wise and kindly man, much given to acts of personal munificence, but one would never guess it from the film.

I recall a delightful story concerning King Richard III. Enormously fond of his two little nephews, he once permitted them to stay a few nights in their very own bed in the Tower of London as a special treat. In fact, he even went so far as to pop in when the youngsters were asleep in order to adjust their pillows. History recalls that the little Princes were so delighted by their visit to the Tower that they chose never to emerge from it, from that day to this! It ill-becomes the moguls of Hollywood that they found no place for this happy anecdote in their familiar travesty.

Sir Roger de Ghastliest, our ex-Ambassador to Naples, is a man for all seasons. Not only a keen crossword addict, often solving two or three clues in a single day, he is also renowned the world over for his charm and ready wit. I have it on good authority that over half a century ago, he was approached by a postman with a letter. "Who is that letter from?" he asked the postman. The postman suggested he find out by opening the aforementioned envelope. Sir Roger replied with a hint of asperity, "Very well." He then opened the envelope — and found out exactly who the letter was from! Sadly, the identity of the sender is not recorded, but the anecdote greatly amuses nonetheless.

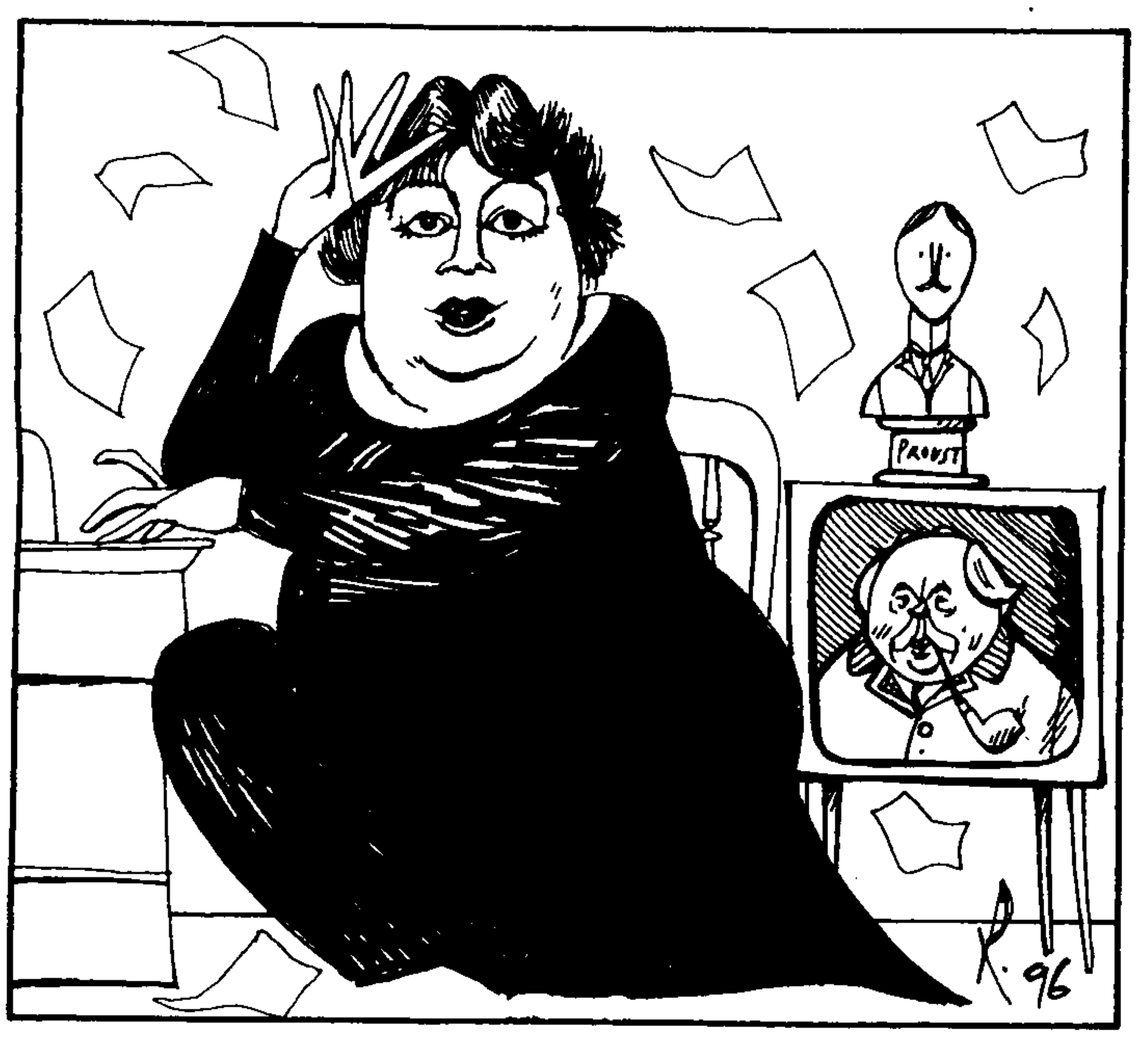
This calls to my mind the Queen Mother, never more beautiful. Her Majesty still receives a great many letters a day from all sorts of different people, all tremendously supportive.

At Crashingham Hall last week Princess Anne had a dead pigeon ceremonially placed in her handbag by the Queen's Lord Lieutenant, Charles Dull, whose ancestors include his great-great grandfather, George, one of whose descendants is his great-great grandson, Charles, and Charles's brother Geoffrey (also Dull), whose father John was the great grandson of George. The ceremony goes back 400 years, and commemorates the old Duke, who was equally fond of dead pigeons and ladies' handbags. Sadly, the Queen Mother could not be present owing to a prior engagement, but as a gesture of respect to the Dull family she will be maintaining a dead pigeon in her handbag throughout the month of May, especially strangled as part of an ancient pageant by Lord St John of Fawsley, whose great grandfather Robert was, alas, no one in particular.

SPARE SOME CHANGE PLEASE, LOVE?
R.I.P.
F**K YOU THEN, MISSUS! SO MUCH FOR CHRISTIAN F***ING CHARITY! THAT'S IT... PRETEND YOU CAN'T SEE ME... PRETEND I DON'T EXIST... MISERABLE BITCH! PISS OFF AND GO TO HELL THEN!
WASN'T LIKE THIS IN MY DAY... WRETCHED VICARS.
LUCY ALLEN

Literary Review

Babel babble



Babel Tower
A.S. Byatt
(Chatto & Windus, £16.99)

IT MIGHT begin:

SEATED at her desk in Herefordshire, Frederica finds her thoughts blowing around her like disordered scraps of newspaper. She thinks, as she so often thinks at these times, of Proust, Mallarmé and William Carlos Williams, of the DNA spirals with their helical imbrications, of Harold Wilson's mackintosh, of the televised preenings and screenings which the knowledgeable define as satire but which Frederica thinks are merely a hectic amplification of the unamplifiable. It is banal, Frederica thinks, to imagine life as a configurative chain, and this is a banal thought.

"I must *work*," she says to her friend Hugh Pink. "I must *write*. Create. *I have to find something to do.*"

"And speak in *italics*," says Hugh intelligently. He is small, dark, pale and tall. "Like the people in Iris Murdoch."

"Hugh Pink. Hugh Pink. Hugh Pink," Frederica says. "I cannot bear these repetitions. *I cannot bear them.*"

OR IT might begin:

Frederica receives letters. They are from old friends, accomplices, people she knows, conspirators and much else in Roget. Tony Watson's says: *Dear Frederica. It is 1964, so I am listening to an interesting record by a group called The Who and covering Harold Wilson's election campaign, these being the historically significant activities demanded of characters in novels about the 1960s. Have you met my friends Antic Grieveson and Rollo Whitebait? Absurd names, I know, but no sillier than those invented by lady novelists. Frederica, I have become obsessed by Orpheus — realising that this obsession is banal, of course — and I have written you a poem:*

The dead sheep
will ever weep
Tolkien, Laing, Saussure and Kleist
hop around in my Zeitgeist.

PS: Have you read about the repeal of the death penalty and the Moors Murders? These are due to happen soon and I think they could go in somewhere.

Frederica sheds cool, dispassionate tears at this. She is less real than he was. Or he is more unreal than she failed to be. It is all very complex, Frederica concludes, wondering what Forster and Lawrence might have thought about it all, and noting in the newspaper that Harold Wilson has won a majority of five.

I believe too that in some distant future the neuroscientists, the geneticists, the students of the matter of the mind, may find out the forms of language in the forests of the dendrites, in the links of the synapses. None of this is exactly helpful to the problem of how to write novels that people will want to read, and pay money for.

Or it might begin in Putney, in a telephone conversation between author and publisher:

"I must *work*. I am the modern George Eliot. I will *not* perform book signings. Or appear with Melvyn Bragg on *Start the Week*. I have to be allowed to *write*."

"All in good time Antonia, love," says the voice. It is a thin, reedy, genteel, desiccated voice. "You get on with it."

"I shall disconnect," says Antonia. "The phone, that is. Unlike Forster. Whom I have always thought banal."

And she goes on writing. And, if no one has yet stopped her, she is writing still.

Books & Bookmen

■ **DILLONS bookstore has been sending customers invitations to meet Jeffrey Archer signing his latest blockbuster, *Fourth Estate*. Curiously, Dillons introduces him as "Eminent MP and Author".**

Apart from the obvious trades description difficulty with the term "author", there is also the problem that Lord Archole of Weston-Super-Mare has not been an MP for some 22 years.

Is it possible there has been some genuine misunderstanding about the precise details of Lord Archer's past and present achievements? Perish the thought!

□ *THE Maxwell and Murdoch clones in Jeffrey Archer's brilliant new novel are cleverly named Townsend and Armstrong. By an extraordinary coincidence these are also the names of, respectively, an unsuccessful suitor and an unsuccessful husband of one Margaret Rose Windsor.*

What is he trying to tell us?

■ **GORE VIDAL, the touchy American prophet of doom, wrote some years ago in the preface to *Armageddon: Essays 1983-1987*: "I shall never write a formal memoir (I have never been my own subject, a sign of truly sickening narcissism)."**

Naturally he cannot be related to the conceited television performer Gore Vidal who recently published a dull and narcissistic replay of his life in *Palimpsest: A Memoir*.

□ FRANCES COADY, the ebulliently glamorous publisher at Granta Books, has got right up the noses of her former colleagues at Random House.

It is so annoying of her to be running an independent company, and yet to be backed, thanks to American magnate Rea Hederman, with a large amount of money; and so renegade, having worked for Random House for several years, to suggest that she is now in a position to publish more creatively than can the poor, hamstrung people she left behind!

Coady's last signing, for a sum not unadjacent to £150,000, is Jeanette Winterson, who herself likes to get up people's noses by telling them she is the world's greatest novelist. Unfortunately, one of Winterson's entourage mistakenly sent the author's agreement to publish with Granta to Coady's successor at Random House, Caroline Michel. It did not take long for the news of Winterson's move to show up in the *Guardian*'s "The Loafer" column, which reported Random House's amusingly childish gloss on the story: "RH made a show of bidding, but in truth were not brokenhearted to see the chalice pass to Frances Coady". So there!

'Bookworm'

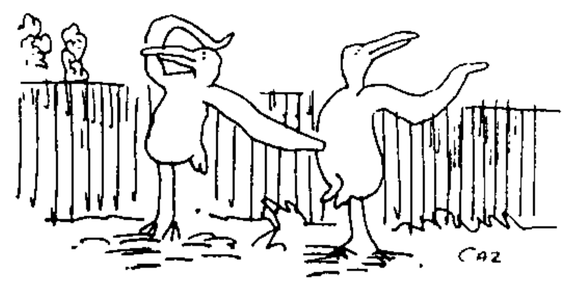
REMAINDERS OF THE DAY

THE AUTHOR: Lord Archer, with his string of "blockbusters".

THE HYPE: HarperCollins's biggest author, reputedly paid £15 million for his latest three book deal which included *The Fourth Estate*, his latest epic.

LAST SEEN: Archer's previous novels are being sent out free to anyone who orders a HarperCollins book by post.

LUVVIES

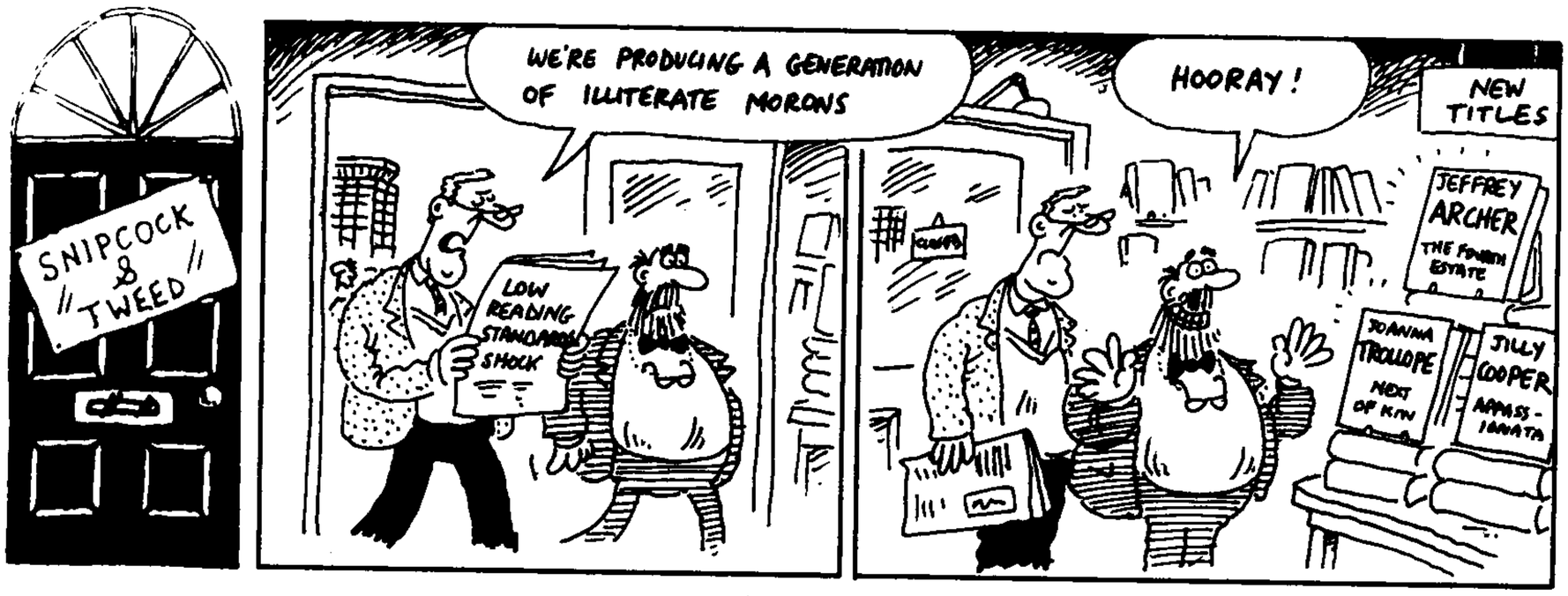


Luvvie birds

"WHAT I want to do ultimately is comedy-romance films, the kind of stuff Tom Hanks does. I used to be embarrassed to say I wanted to be in the movies, but I'm not now. I'm not really a game show host. But I have to learn to be less manic — on the big screen less is more. When I was in the States, I took lessons on how to do movie comedy from a guy called MK Lewis, who taught Burt Reynolds."

SHANE RICHIE
Mail on Sunday's *Night & Day*

Submitted by S. Sweep



footnotes

TWO SECRETARIES, TWO DIRECTORS: Lord Wakeham, Norman Lamont

THE GRAPES OF ROTHSCHILD(contd)

IN ITS recent report on coal privatisation, the normally bland National Audit Office, is rather critical of the relationship between the government and its financial adviser, Rothschild's.

The report reveals that:

● Rothschild's was asked to tender only for a short-term project "to assist with exploring the options for the sale". Rather suddenly, ministers decided this short-term project should become a long-term project to be financial adviser for the whole privatisation.

● Ministers then handed Rothschild's the whole contract for financial advice on the coal privatisation without allowing any other firm a look in.

● Rothschild's, after being appointed, then set a typically high hourly rate and demanded an exorbitant "success fee". The rates and the fee were eventually reduced after "negotiation"; but because of the uncompetitive way Rothschild's had been appointed without tender, the government could not compare Rothschild's demands with what other firms might have charged. In the event Rothschild's haul from coal privatisation was £9.2 million of good old taxpayers' money.

The audit office confirmed to the *Eye* that these controversial negotiations and agreements with Rothschild's took place in May 1991. In that month, the two ministers at the head of the government departments negotiating with Rothschild's were Norman Lamont, chancellor of the exchequer, and John Wakeham, secretary of state for energy.

John Wakeham left the government in 1992, became Lord Wakeham, and in 1995 joined the board of Rothschild's.

Norman Lamont left the government in 1994 and... joined the board of Rothschild's.

Police Cover-up Authority

■ THE campaign, led by the *Daily Mail*, to reduce the damages paid to people beaten up or abused by the police, carefully avoids the awkward question: what remedy do the victims of police assaults have outside the courts?

The formal answer is the Police Complaints Authority which has neither the power nor the ability to investigate anything itself, so it passes on complaints to the accused police forces.

In most cases the police investigations which follow are not even supervised by the PCA. Perhaps not surprisingly, the vast majority conclude that the police are blameless. Even if the police are criticised, the PCA has no power to reprimand or discipline them or compensate the victims. In the two recent cases of high damages awarded to people beaten up by the Metropolitan police — Kenneth Hsu got £220,000; and Michael Goswell, £306,000 — complaints were registered with the PCA but no action followed.

A shocking example of the impotence of the PCA is the case, familiar to *Eye* readers, of John Gorman, the former police officer who complained about the state of British Airways food and ever since has been subjected to a campaign of harassment and abuse.

Much of the abuse came in anonymous telephone calls denouncing Mr Gorman in the vilest terms and threatening him with violence if he did not stop his action against BA. Mr Gorman called in British Telecom who traced several of the calls to Heathrow and West Drayton police stations (Heathrow police are entirely financed by the British Airports Authority, whose main customer is British Airways).

Mr Gorman complained to the PCA. The PCA set up an inquiry under Det Supt Michael Lovelock of the Metropolitan police area — which includes the stations at Heathrow and West Drayton.

The PCA inquiry took two years. Its conclusion was first set out last August by Mrs Linda Cawsey. She reported that Mr Lovelock had carried out one interview, and only one, with each of the officers who had access to the police phones to which the abusive calls were traced. All denied making the calls. And so that was the end of the matter.

JOHN GORMAN

Mrs Cawsey wrote to Mr Gorman: "The deputy assistant commissioner accepts that these calls were probably made by Metropolitan police service personnel. The authority concur with this view and I have relayed my concerns to the force regarding the unsatisfactory outcome of this aspect of your complaint."

Gorman wrote again and again to protest. Why was the word "probably" used? Who else but police personnel could make several telephone calls from two highly secure police stations? If the PCA were indeed convinced that police officers were probably making abusive and threatening calls to a former colleague who has never broken the law, could they do nothing more drastic than "relay their concerns"? No, replied Mrs Cawsey, they couldn't. No wonder more and more people abused and attacked by the police prefer to put their case to juries rather than to an ineffectual and hamstrung quango.

Beaks of the Week

B.H. Fish JP and Mrs P.A. Mott, JP Bristol

Robert Massey who lives in Bristol is sick, and has relied for many years on benefit. In June 1993 he still owed £461.56 in poll tax arrears, and Bristol magistrates handed him down a prison sentence of 40 days suspended as long as Mr Massey paid £10 a month towards his arrears. Mr Massey did his best for a year or so, but then he fell behind. In September 1994 Bristol City Council asked the court to send him to prison. Mr Massey wasn't in court, but that didn't stop Justices B.H. Fish and Mrs P.A. Mott imposing a prison sentence of 39 days. No one could find him, so nothing happened.

On 29th March this year, Mr Massey attended Bristol magistrates court over another debt. The police were told to take him to Horfield prison to serve his 39 day sentence imposed in 1994. Bristol police were so shocked at his condition and his complete lack of understanding about what had happened to him that they put him in touch with a lawyer. That evening Mr Justice Sedley ordered Mr Massey's release. The magistrates, he said, had acted entirely unlawfully.

THE THINGS THEY SAY

"The honours system is nothing more than an excuse for a bunch of clapped-out politicians to award themselves and their friends titles they don't deserve".

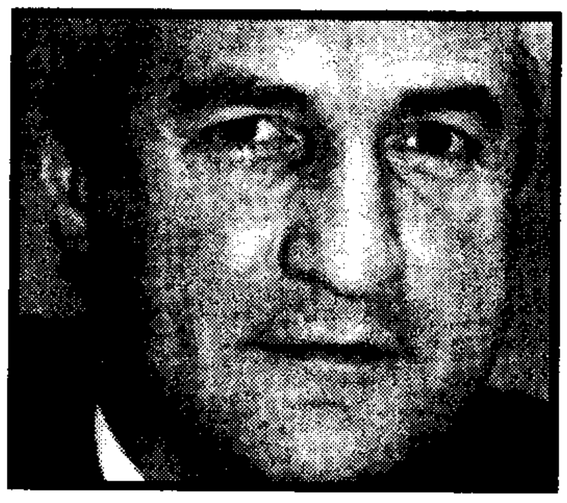
Keith Townsend, fictional newspaper proprietor, quoted in The Fourth Estate, *a novel by Jeffrey Archer, otherwise known as Lord Archer of Weston Super-Mare. COPWITHEDD. (Clapped Out Politician With Title He Doesn't Deserve).*

Kynoch, Kynoch, who's there?

■ "FREE Enterprise for Scotland!" is the consistent theme of Scottish industry minister George Kynoch who never boasts about the free enterprise triumphs of his family firm, Kynoch Group plc.

Until the heyday of Thatcherism the Kynoch Group was a modest success. By its 200th anniversary in 1988 it could boast an annual profit of £235,000. But George Kynoch, who was finance director and then chief executive, set his sights much higher. Out went the old fuddy duddy textiles which had done so well for so long, and in came "medical and engineering services".

The bold diversification was boosted by the Scottish Development Agency, which between 1985 and 1990 bought half a million pounds worth of shares in the company with taxpayers' money (and then in 1990 the group switched its head office from Aberdeenshire, Scotland, to Andover, England).



"GENIUS" GEORGE KYNOCH, MP

At first the diversification was a splendid success — thanks to the 1991 Gulf War. The company's new "protection equipment" against nuclear and chemical weapons was all the rage in the Gulf and the orders flowed in. Profits soared.

George Kynoch, meanwhile, had been selected as Tory candidate for Kincardine and Deesside. He struck a glorious deal with his company. If he did not get elected as an MP he would get £30,000 "compensation" and a £25,000 a year consultancy for four days work a month. If he was elected, as he was, he would still be a paid consultant on £13,000 a year for two days a month.

Once the Gulf War was over, however, profits started to fall. Losses in 1994 were £710,000. The share price slumped. No doubt it was the remarkable record of the Kynoch Group (including the purchase in 1988 of a firm called Lawrence Smith for £315,000, sold in 1994 for £252,000) which brought "Genius" George to the notice of the prime minister.

In 1995 Mr Kynoch became minister for industry in all Scotland. He is responsible for the Scottish Development Agency, which recently changed its name to Scottish Enterprise — and for the shares with which the quango is lumbered. High on the list of embarrassing holdings are shares in Kynoch Group, bought for half a million quid in the late 1980s and not worth half that today. Every time Scottish Enterprise chiefs try to decide what to do about their bum shares, they must remember not to ask the minister.

Up against the Walsh

■ Here are a couple of tips for Brian Walsh QC of Leeds on his appointment as a circuit judge.

1) Always make sure relevant evidence is disclosed to the defence. Remember the case of Judy Ward who spent 18 years in prison for IRA bombings on a motorway which she could not possibly have committed, and for which she would never have been convicted if vital alibi evidence obtained by the police had been given to the defence and the jury.

Have another look at the appeal court judgement in the Ward case where Lord Justice Glidewell mercilessly attacked the non-disclosure of evidence, criticising, among others, the junior prosecuting counsel in the original case, one Brian Walsh.

2) Try to avoid prosecutions which end up collapsing and costing the taxpayer a lot of money. A salutary example is the 1985 case in which 40 miners were put on trial for riot during the striking miners' picket at Orgreave cokeworks. The prosecution collapsed after costing at least a quarter of a million pounds. The prosecuting counsel was Brian Walsh QC.

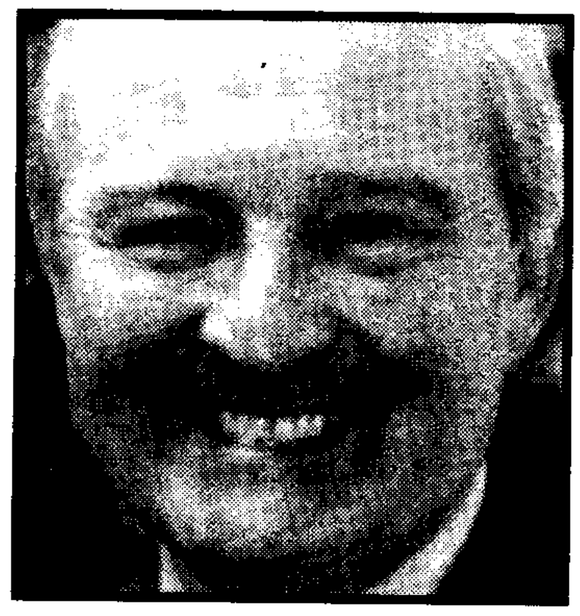
The stickler of Wakefield

PRESS FREEDOM PERSONIFIED: Ursula Wills-Jones behind bars

■ By careful reading of the Internet, West Yorkshire police had plenty of notice of the occupation on 30th May last year of an unpopular opencast mining project at Garforth, Leeds. So they swooped at once and started arresting demonstrators.

Two journalists who were covering the event for the Big Issue, Justin Cooke and Ursula Wills-Jones, were also arrested. They explained that they were only there for the story, and produced a notebook, a camera and press cards to prove it. They were promptly packed into a van, held for the whole day and most of the night in a Leeds police station and charged with "aggravated trespass". National Union of Journalists' lawyers, Stephens Innocent, explained to Lawrence Sherrington, the Crown Prosecutor at Wakefield, that the two "trespassers" were journalists doing their job, and asked for the charges to be dropped. Mr Sherrington paid no attention.

The case this month didn't last very long. Almost every important detail supplied to the court by the arresting officers was contradicted by a front-page photograph of the arrests in the Yorkshire Post. The magistrate quickly chucked all the charges out. Costs were awarded out of public funds (taxpayer).



BUSY BOB'S BUSINESS

■ "Busy" Bob Horton, chairman of Railtrack is not full-time, so for part of his week he can turn aside from the universally-detested privatisation of the railways to even more controversial business ventures. A good example was the take-over of Premier Industrial Corporation, Cleveland, Ohio, by Yorkshire's Farnell Electronics, thus creating the world's third largest electronics distributor.

As with almost all take-overs, the Farnell share price shot up and so most shareholders were happy to back the deal. But there was strong opposition from two former directors, two major institutions and PIRC, the consultancy on proper corporate practice. PIRC denounced the take-over as too expensive (it cost Farnells £1.85bn when its market capitalization is £910m) and too generous with the powers it handed over to the aging Premier management.

The whole ludicrous extravaganza was devised and orchestrated by Bob Horton, who joined the Farnell board as a part-time director in October 1994. Horton had first met and befriended the Mandel family when he worked in Cleveland Ohio for BP in 1987. On a trip to New York in November last year, Busy Bob met Morton Mandel, 74, Premier's chairman, and the two men quickly worked out a deal. The Farnell directors couldn't wait to be transformed from relatively small-time Yorkshire hicks into world-wide moguls. Others who benefit from the deal whether it succeeds or not are the Mandel family, who pocket a fantastic 1.8 billion dollars and of course Mr Horton who is thoroughly entitled to his "finders fee", not yet disclosed.

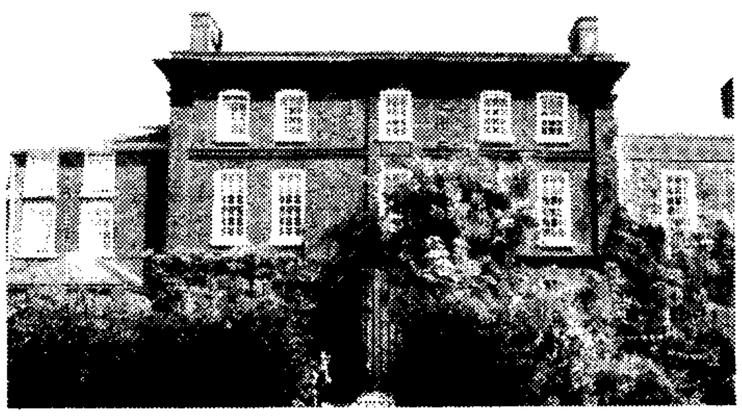
You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

THAT great patriot Sir James Goldsmith rallies Little Englanders to his Referendum party with calls to defend the shores of Britain against the threat of a federal Europe and the invading grey hordes of Eurocrats.

The Euro-haters and all-purpose xenophobes who find his message attractive overlook, or may be unaware of, little personal details — such as that the saviour of the British nation was born in France, represents French voters in the despised European Parliament, is referred to in company documents as "Anglo-French", has more homes abroad than he does in Britain and lists one of them, in a little corner of Jalisco province that will be forever Mexico, as his residential address as a director of the Referendum party.

As the election nears, Tory strategists who fear the lost votes and seats the Referendum party may inflict will no doubt lose no time reminding voters that Goldsmith is far from a true Brit. Questions are likely to be raised about whether the candidate pays any significant tax here — or any tax at all. That question could well revolve around where the great patriot lives and how much time each year he visits the land not of his fathers. And there, the key could



Chez Goldsmith: Home Sweet Tax Haven

lie at Ormeley Lodge, the million pound mansion on Ham Common in south-west London which Lady Annabel Goldsmith calls home and where, when not with his other family in New York or Mexico, this champion of morality and family values is registered to vote.

But as might be expected with Goldsmith, the ownership of Ormeley Lodge is far from the routine "who votes owns" status of those homeowners the Referendum party seeks to woo. Ever since Lady Annabel arrived at Ormeley Lodge just over 20 years ago it has for possibly all that time been owned by companies, either British companies controlled offshore or now offshore companies period.

The initial buyer of Ormeley Lodge was reported to be Lady Annabel at a price of around £250,000 in August 1975. However, in 1976 it would appear that the property was bought by the British company Figurewalk for £350,000. It promptly raised money from the Goldsmith-controlled Banque Occidentale using the Georgian mansion as security. For the next three years who actually owned the house was less than clear as Figurewalk's shares were held by two Goldsmith associates.

But in 1979 Figurewalk became clearly identifiable within the Goldsmith corporate empire as a subsidiary of Argyle Securities, which was controlled by his then Hong Kong master company, General Oriental. A year later Figurewalk became directly owned by GO. Not that the offshore trail stopped in Hong Kong. GO was itself owned via two Panamanian companies by the Brunneria Foundation in the total secrecy haven of Liechtenstein.

It then emerged that in 1979 Lady Annabel had been granted a nine-year lease on Ormeley Lodge at a market rent then calculated at £80,000 a year. In return for an option to buy the mansion for £1.14 million or a higher market value, Goldsmith generously guaranteed the rent. This represented, with improvements, the cost of the house plus antique furniture and fittings to Figurewalk.

That was the position until late 1985 when control of Figurewalk was sold to a Dutch subsidiary of General Oriental Investments, which had replaced GO and moved from Hong Kong to a more beneficial tax haven — the Cayman Islands.

Following this corporate reshuffle, in March 1986 Ormeley Lodge was sold by Figurewalk to another British company, Ormeley Lodge Limited for £1.59 million, including the contents. The deal was subject to the 1979 lease and option to buy. Shortly afterwards Figurewalk "emigrated to Holland for tax purposes" where it was wound-up in June 1986.

Ormeley Lodge was also owned by the Goldsmith master company GOIL, and in August 1988 Lady Annabel was granted another lease — this time for 20 years at a rent of £130,000 a year. By now at the top of the property boom Ormeley Lodge was valued at £1.95 million.

In 1989 there was another offshore reshuffle behind the curtains on Ham Common. GOIL sold control of Ormeley Lodge Limited to Verton Holdings, also a Cayman company, which was controlled by yet another Liechtenstein entity, the opaque Overton Foundation.

This was the position until July 1993 when Ormeley Lodge Limited was wound up by its owners. The day before this took place one share in the company was issued to Ormeley Holdings, which shared the same crowded Cayman post office box as GOIL and Verton, for £1.14 million. This by no doubt remarkable coincidence was the figure at which Goldsmith had been granted the option to buy Ormeley Lodge back in 1979 if the market value was not higher. By 1992 the market value had been estimated at £1.5 million — the valuation carried at the winding up. And on the winding up the assets of Ormeley Lodge Limited (Ormeley Lodge) were distributed to its shareholders in specie.

Which may well explain why today Ormeley Lodge is shown as being owned by Ormeley Holdings, which no doubt is some relation to the Cayman company of that same name. Not, however, that any reference to Cayman post office box numbers sullies the Land Registry. Instead, Ormeley Holdings is to be found care of Stanhope Administration, the Windsor company which administers Goldsmith's companies here, whose address he uses and two of whose executives are also directors of the Referendum party.

Exactly why the odyssey of Ormeley Lodge, the Goldsmith (English) family home, should have passed through such an offshore labyrinth is of course largely explicable in one three-letter word — tax. But if and how Goldsmith has benefited from these characteristically non-see-through corporate arrangements is, needless to say, less than clear. But it will no doubt be asked to be made clear by his political opponents as and when and if he stands as the Referendum party candidate for anywhere adjacent to Ham Common.

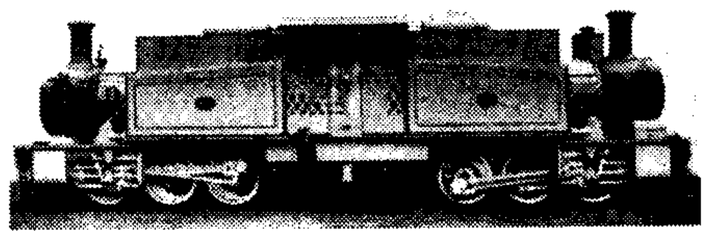
RUPERT GALLIERS-PRATT is one of those businessmen to whom bad things just keep happening, even though it is never his fault. Harvey & Thompson collapsed; he was suddenly surplus to requirements at St Petersburg Long Distance; and dreams of a gold mine in Kazakhstan are on hold.

Now it emerges that he is still caught up in the 1993 collapse of property company Hotelier, which went under owing £5.75 million to Barclays and £350,000 to housebuilders Bryants. The total deficiency after Barclays had taken what assets were available was estimated at £4.4 million, mostly to Barclays and Bryants.

Hotelier was involved in a property deal with Bryants in Ludlow, Shropshire. But it all seems to have gone wrong very quickly. Galliers-Pratt blames partners Bryants and Fletcher Homes. However, the company records show him as the sole director. And three years after the crash the liquidator has still only realised £24,000 and can give no date as to when the liquidation will be completed.

Just another piece of typical bad luck for Galliers-Pratt and his partners. No wonder he has such an unjustified unenviable reputation. So much so that when Kevin Maxwell, Britain's biggest ever bankrupt who shares a shadowy Russian connection in Grigori Loutchansky of Nordex, was asked recently if he knew "RPG" his immediate comment was: "Doesn't pay his bills".

'Slicker'



SIGNAL FAILURES

ANOTHER person whose career has been salvaged by rail privatisation (see *Eyes passim* on Bob Horton etc) is Geoff Harrison-Mee, recently appointed by French firm CGEA as managing director for the Network SouthCentral franchise.

Harrison-Mee was moved from his job as director of Railtrack's south zone in 1993 after an inquiry found he had "engaged in 'touching' a female employee in a manner unacceptable to the organisation and which constitutes sexual harassment" and conducted a relationship "in a manner not conducive with your position as the head of a substantial organisation".

The allegations related to his period as director of Network SouthEast's south eastern division, in charge of station managers and other female employees. He was subsequently shunted "upstairs" to a post in British Railways Board headquarters, away from carnal temptation. But on 26 May Geoff Harasses-Me, as he is known in the industry, returns to a position of authority as md of London and South Coast Railways, the former NSC franchise. The strict moral code of the publicly-owned railway is yet another feature apparently being ditched in the switch to privatisation.

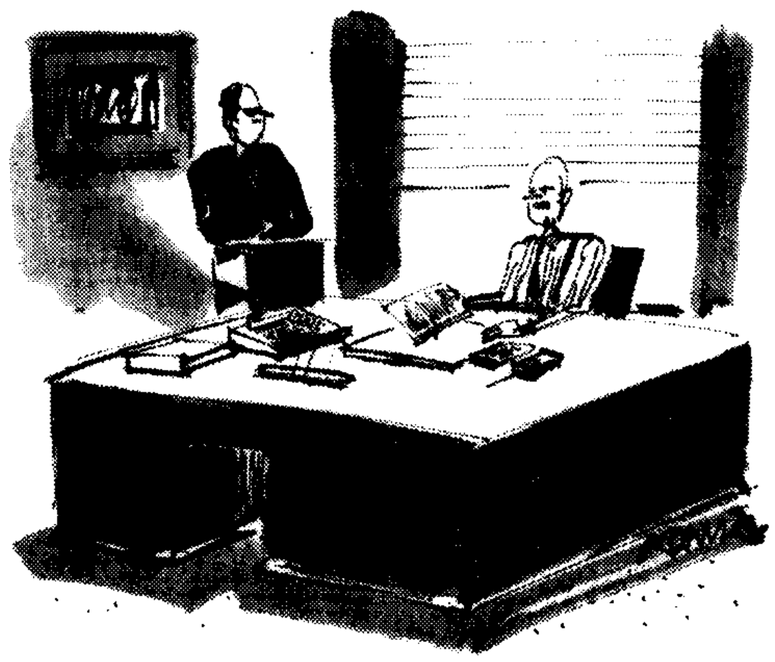
● A PATHETIC advertising feature in several local newspapers provided a disturbing insight into the commercial mind of bus and train operator Stagecoach. The company, which has already been awarded the South West Trains franchise and is in the running for more, took out the ads to rubbish proposals for restoring the rail route between Oxford and Cambridge — and to beg for subsidy for its X5 bus service on that corridor.

Such a rail link, extended to Swindon, would have many uses. In particular it would relieve congestion in central London by allowing people to change between any of Britain's principal InterCity routes without using London termini and London Underground. This point is lost on Stagecoach, which cannot grasp the concept of a coordinated network and sees the project merely as a local service for people in East Anglia and Oxfordshire.

The advertising feature brushes aside the proposed route's huge potential for rail freight by saying lengthy detours do not damage rail freight custom. "Support for ensuring the longterm future for (sic) the seven days a week, hourly X5 would be a far better use of public subsidy than supporting the inflexible rail link," concluded the adverts.

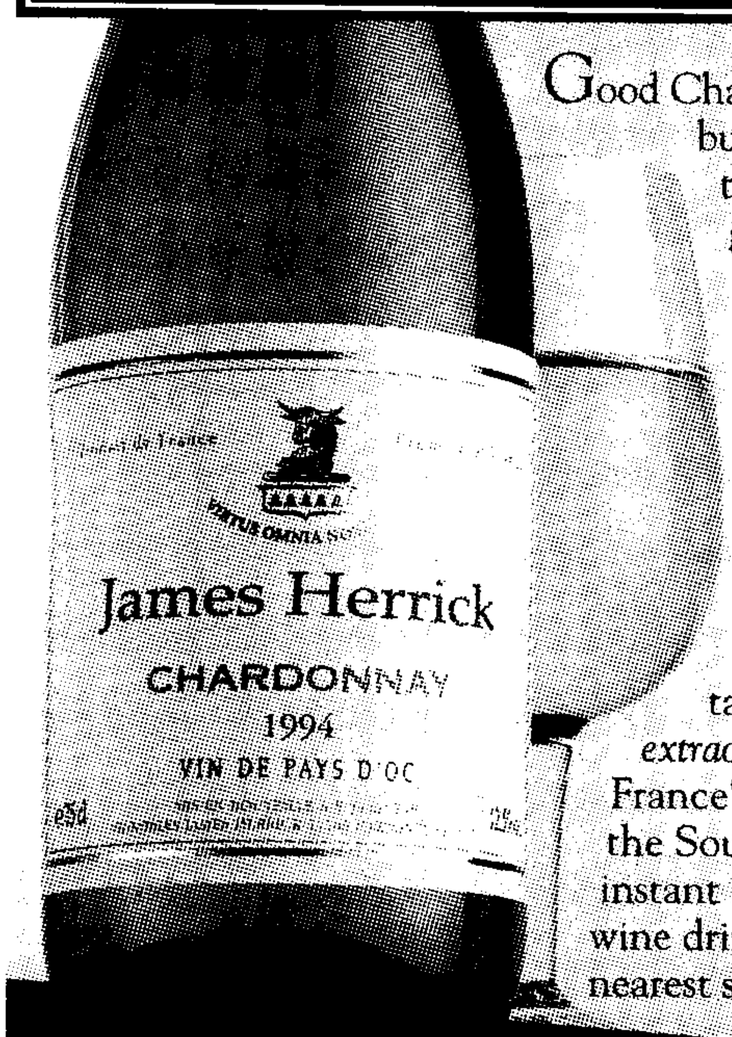
The success of new long-distance services between provincial cities reversed the fortunes of Regional Railways during the 80s, but if Stagecoach gets its hands on any of the Regional Railways franchises, passengers can kiss goodbye to any thought of developing new routes (and probably kiss goodbye to many of the cross-country services they already have).

'Dr B. Ching'



"Any Friend of the Earth is no friend of mine!"

They say travel broadens the mind; it certainly improves the Chardonnay.



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DIRECTIONS: These statements are designed to measure the way you feel in certain areas. There are no right or wrong answers, so work quickly, marking the appropriate box beside each statement.
1= Clearly Agree, 2= Slightly Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Slightly Disagree, 5= Clearly Disagree

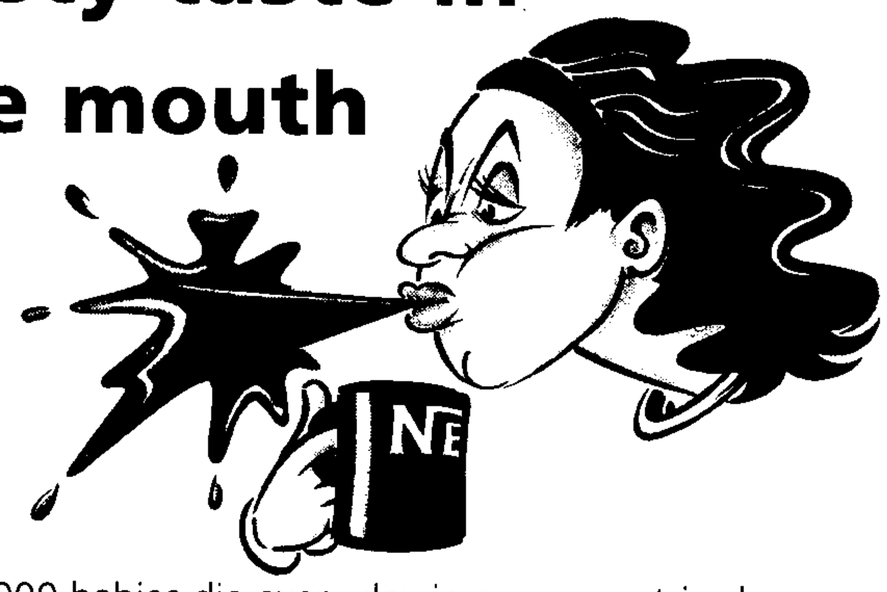
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Common interests are more important than romantic love.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I enjoy the company of the opposite sex more than that of my own.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Physical contact is an important form of communication.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I have to know someone for a long time before I can trust them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I have pleasant memories of my childhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. The man should pay for everything on a date.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. It's fun to surprise my friends with small gifts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Worrying too much about money spoils happiness.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. A strong relationship must include a good sex life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. I believe in telling people if I think they are making a mistake.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

MULTIPLE CHOICE - Circle best answer or answers.

I. I prefer socialising and dating members of the opposite sex whose age range is a) 18-25 b)26-35 c)36-49 d)over 50	a b c d
II. I am currently a) single b) divorced c) widowed d) separated e) eligible to meet and date socially	a b c d e
My annual income this year will be a)under 15k b) 15-25k c) 25-35k d) 35-50k e) over 50k	a b c d e
Name:	
Address:	Sex: M☐ F☐
Town & Postcode:	Age:
Telephone -Home: Work:	Ht:
Occupation:	Wt:

Send your reply to Selective *Singles*
Berkeley House. 73 Upper Richmond Road. Putney. London SW15 2SZ.

Some things leave a nasty taste in the mouth



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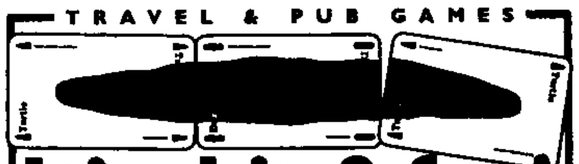

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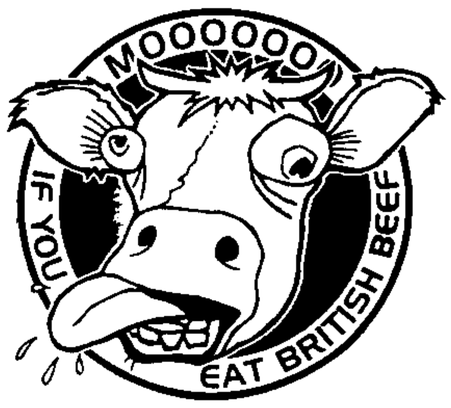

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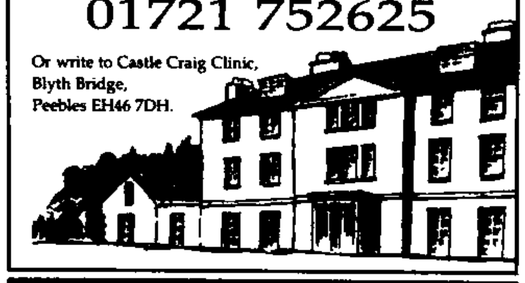

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SPEECHWRITING by Mitch Murray. See Page 31.

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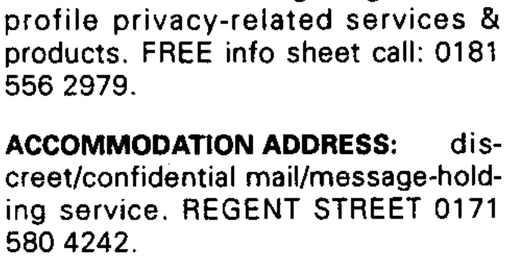

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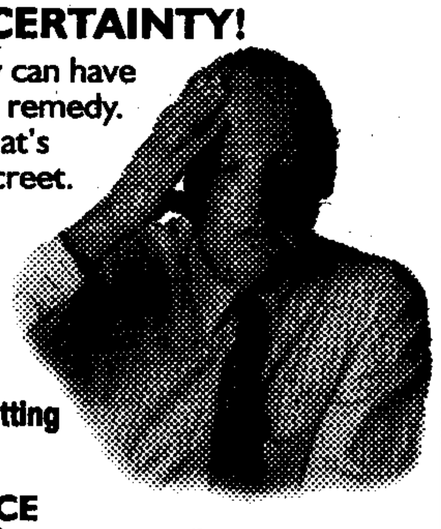

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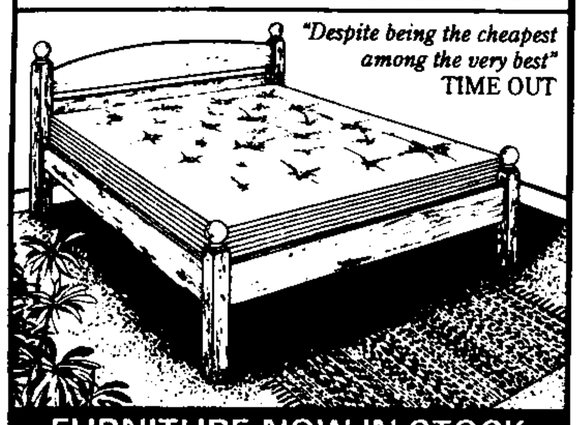

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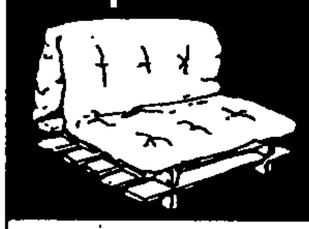

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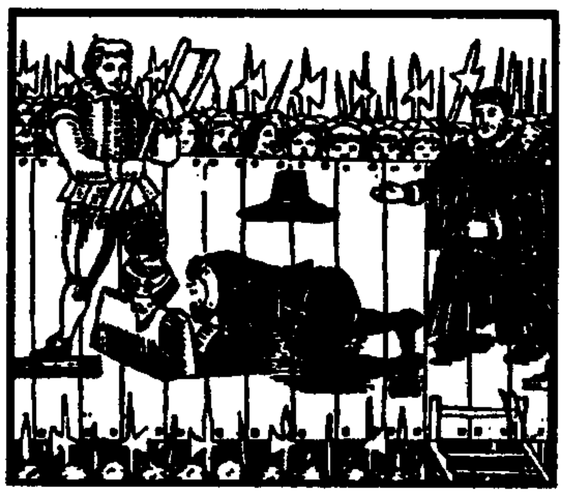

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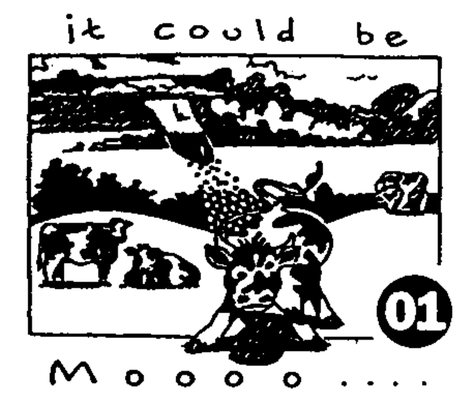

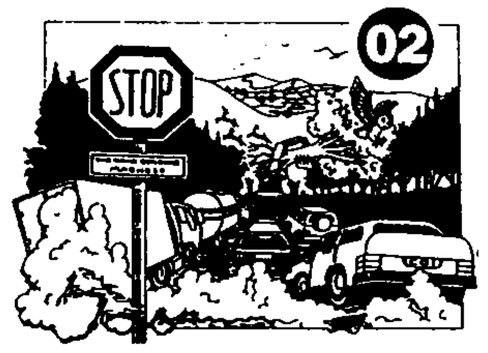

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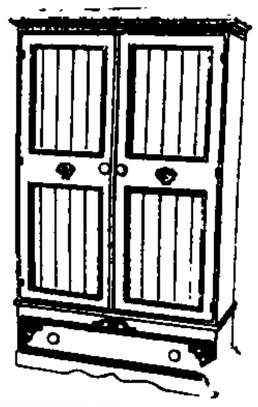

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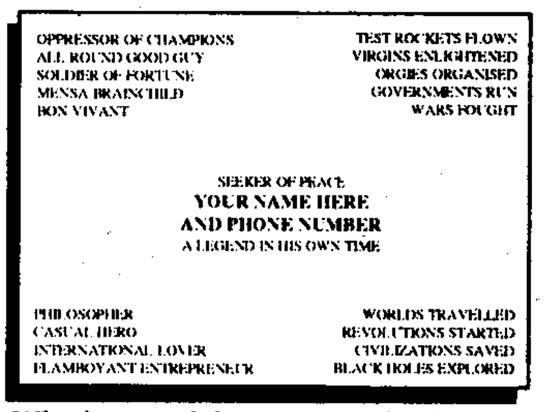

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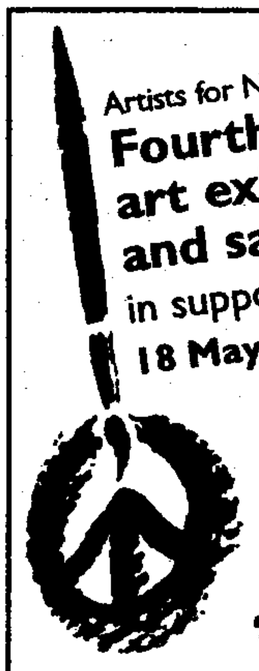

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